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…ERESTING NARRATIVE
OF
THE LIFE
OF
…AUDAH EQUI…NO,
OR
…USTAVUS VASSA,
THE AFRICAN.
…TEN BY HIMSELF.

VOL I.

…God is my salvation; I will trust and not be …aid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my …g, he also is become my salvation.
…t that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon …name, declare his doings among the people, …iah xii. 2, 4.

…ECOND EDITION.

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To the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons of the Parliament of Great Britain.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

PERMIT me, with the greatest deference and respect, to lay at your feet the following genuine Narrative; the chief design of which is to excite in your august assemblies a sense of compassion for the miseries which the Slave-Trade has entailed on my unfortunate countrymen. By the horrors of that trade was I first torn away from all the tender connexions that were naturally dear to my heart; but these, through

through the myſterious ways of Providence, I ought to regard as infinitely more than compenſated by the introduction I have thence obtained to the knowledge of the Chriſtian religion, and of a nation which, by its liberal ſentiments, its humanity, the glorious freedom of its government, and its proficiency in arts and ſciences, has exalted the dignity of human nature.

I am ſenſible I ought to entreat your pardon for addreſſing to you a work ſo wholly devoid of literary merit; but, as the production of an unlettered African, who is actuated by the hope of becoming an inſtrument towards the relief of his ſuffering countrymen, I truſt that *ſuch a man*, pleading in *ſuch a*

cause, will be acquitted of boldneſs and preſumption.

May the God of heaven inſpire your hearts with peculiar benevolence on that important day when the queſtion of Abolition is to be diſcuſſed, when thouſands, in conſequence of your Determination, are to look for Happineſs or Miſery!

I am,

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your moſt obedient,

And devoted humble Servant,

OLAUDAH EQUIANO,

OR

GUSTAVUS VASSA.

No. 10, Union-Street, Mary-le-bone,
Dec. 24, 1789.

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THE LIFE, &c.

CHAPTER I.

The author's account of his country, and their manners and customs—Administration of justice—Embrenche—Marriage ceremony, and public entertainments—Mode of living—Dress—Manufactures Buildings—Commerce—Agriculture—War and religion—Superstition of the natives—Funeral ceremonies of the priests or magicians—Curious mode of discovering poison—Some hints concerning the origin of the author's countrymen, with the opinions of different writers on that subject.

I BELIEVE it is difficult for those who publish their own memoirs to escape the imputation of vanity; nor is this the

the only disadvantage under which they labour: it is also their misfortune, that what is uncommon is rarely, if ever, believed, and what is obvious we are apt to turn from with disgust, and to charge the writer with impertinence. People generally think those memoirs only worthy to be read or remembered which abound in great or striking events, those, in short, which in a high degree excite either admiration or pity: all others they consign to contempt and oblivion. It is therefore, I confess, not a little hazardous in a private and obscure individual, and a stranger too, thus to solicit the indulgent attention of the public; especially when I own I offer here the history of neither a saint, a hero, nor a tyrant. I believe there are few events in my life, which have not happened to many: it is true the incidents of it are numerous; and, did I consider myself an European,

I might

I might ſay my ſufferings were great: but when I compare my lot with that of moſt of my countrymen, I regard myſelf as a *particular favourite of Heaven*, and acknowledge the mercies of Providence in every occurrence of my life. If then the following narrative does not appear ſufficiently intereſting to engage general attention, let my motive be ſome excuſe for its publication. I am not ſo fooliſhly vain as to expect from it either immortality or literary reputation. If it affords any ſatisfaction to my numerous friends, at whoſe requeſt it has been written, or in the ſmalleſt degree promotes the intereſts of humanity, the ends for which it was undertaken will be fully attained, and every wiſh of my heart gratified. Let it therefore be remembered, that, in wiſhing to avoid cenſure, I do not aſpire to praiſe.

That part of Africa, known by the name of Guinea, to which the trade for ſlaves is carried on, extends along the coaſt above 3400 miles, from the Senegal to Angola, and includes a variety of kingdoms. Of theſe the moſt conſiderable is the kingdom of Benen, both as to extent and wealth, the richneſs and cultivation of the ſoil, the power of its king, and the number and warlike diſpoſition of the inhabitants. It is ſituated nearly under the line, and extends along the coaſt about 170 miles, but runs back into the interior part of Africa to a diſtance hitherto I believe unexplored by any traveller; and ſeems only terminated at length by the empire of Abyſſinia, near 1500 miles from its beginning. This kingdom is divided into many provinces or diſtricts: in one of the moſt remote and fertile of which, called

called Eboe, I was born, in the year 1745, in a charming fruitful vale, named Essaka. The distance of this province from the capital of Benin and the sea coast must be very considerable; for I had never heard of white men or Europeans, nor of the sea; and our subjection to the king of Benin was little more than nominal; for every transaction of the government, as far as my slender observation extended, was conducted by the chiefs or elders of the place. The manners and government of a people who have little commerce with other countries are generally very simple; and the history of what passes in one family or village may serve as a specimen of a nation. My father was one of those elders or chiefs I have spoken of, and was styled Embrenche; a term, as I remember, importing the highest distinction, and

ſignifying in our language a *mark* of grandeur. This mark is conferred on the perſon entitled to it, by cutting the ſkin acroſs at the top of the forehead, and drawing it down to the eye-brows; and while it is in this ſituation apply-ing a warm hand, and rubbing it until it ſhrinks up into a thick *weal* acroſs the lower part of the forehead. Moſt of the judges and ſenators were thus marked; my father had long born it: I had ſeen it conferred on one of my brothers, and I was alſo *deſtined* to receive it by my parents. Thoſe Embrence, or chief men, decided diſputes and puniſhed crimes; for which purpoſe they always aſſembled together. The proceedings were generally ſhort; and in moſt caſes the law of retaliation prevailed. I remember a man was brought before my father, and the other judges, for kidnapping a boy; and,

and, although he was the son of a chief or senator, he was condemned to make recompense by a man or woman slave. Adultery, however, was sometimes punished with slavery or death; a punishment which I believe is inflicted on it throughout most of the nations of Africa *: so sacred among them is the honour of the marriage bed, and so jealous are they of the fidelity of their wives. Of this I recollect an instance: —a woman was convicted before the judges of adultery, and delivered over, as the custom was, to her husband to be punished. Accordingly he determined to put her to death: but it being found, just before her execution, that she had an infant at her breast; and no woman being prevailed on to perform

* See Benezet's "Account of Guinea" throughout.

the part of a nurfe, fhe was fpared on account of the child. The men, however, do not preferve the fame conftancy to their wives, which they expect from them; for they indulge in a plurality, though feldom in more than two. Their mode of marriage is thus:—both parties are ufually betrothed when young by their parents, (though I have known the males to betroth themfelves). On this occafion a feaft is prepared, and the bride and bridegroom ftand up in the midft of all their friends, who are affembled for the purpofe, while he declares fhe is thenceforth to be looked upon as his wife, and that no other perfon is to pay any addreffes to her. This is alfo immediately proclaimed in the vicinity, on which the bride retires from the affembly. Some time after fhe is brought home to her hufband, and then

then another feaſt is made, to which the relations of both parties are invited; her parents then deliver her to the bridegroom, accompanied with a number of bleſſings, and at the ſame time they tie round her waiſt a cotton ſtring of the thickneſs of a gooſe-quill, which none but married women are permitted to wear: ſhe is now conſidered as completely his wife; and at this time the dowry is given to the new married pair, which generally conſiſts of portions of land, ſlaves, and cattle, houſehold goods, and implements of huſbandry. Theſe are offered by the friends of both parties; beſides which the parents of the bridegroom preſent gifts to thoſe of the bride, whoſe property ſhe is looked upon before marriage; but after it ſhe is eſteemed the ſole property of her huſband. The ceremony being now ended

ended the feſtival begins, which is celebrated with bonefires, and loud acclamations of joy, accompanied with muſic and dancing.

We are almoſt a nation of dancers, muſicians, and poets. Thus every great event, ſuch as a triumphant return from battle, or other cauſe of public rejoicing is celebrated in public dances, which are accompanied with ſongs and muſic ſuited to the occaſion. The aſſembly is ſeparated into four diviſions, which dance either apart or in ſucceſſion, and each with a character peculiar to itſelf. The firſt diviſion contains the married men, who in their dances frequently exhibit feats of arms, and the repreſentation of a battle. To theſe ſucceed the married women, who dance in the ſecond diviſion. The young men occupy the third; and the maidens the fourth.

Each

Each reprefents fome interefting fcene of real life, fuch as a great achievement, domeftic employment, a pathetic ftory, or fome rural fport; and as the fubject is generally founded on fome recent event, it is therefore ever new. This gives our dances a fpirit and variety which I have fcarcely feen elfewhere *. We have many mufical inftruments, particularly drums of different kinds, a piece of mufic which refembles a guitar, and another much like a ftickado. Thefe laft are chiefly ufed by betrothed virgins, who play on them on all grand feftivals.

As our manners are fimple, our luxuries are few. The drefs of both fexes is nearly the fame. It generally confifts of a long piece of callico, or muflin, wrapped loofely round the

* When I was in Smyrna I have frequently feen the Greeks dance after this manner.

body, ſomewhat in the form of a highland plaid. This is uſually dyed blue, which is our favourite colour. It is extracted from a berry, and is brighter and richer than any I have ſeen in Europe. Beſides this, our women of diſtinction wear golden ornaments; which they diſpoſe with ſome profuſion on their arms and legs. When our women are not employed with the men in tillage, their uſual occupation is ſpinning and weaving cotton, which they afterwards dye, and make it into garments. They alſo manufacture earthen veſſels, of which we have many kinds. Among the reſt tobacco pipes, made after the ſame faſhion, and uſed in the ſame manner, as thoſe in Turkey *.

* The bowl is earthen, curiouſly figured, to which a long reed is fixed as a tube. This tube is ſometimes ſo long as to be born by one, and frequently out of grandeur by two boys.

Our

Our manner of living is entirely plain; for as yet the natives are unacquainted with those refinements in cookery which debauch the taste: bullocks, goats, and poultry, supply the greatest part of their food. These constitute likewise the principal wealth of the country, and the chief articles of its commerce. The flesh is usually stewed in a pan; to make it savoury we sometimes use also pepper, and other spices, and we have salt made of wood ashes. Our vegetables are mostly plantains, eadas, yams, beans, and Indian corn. The head of the family usually eats alone; his wives and slaves have also their separate tables. Before we taste food we always wash our hands: indeed our cleanliness on all occasions is extreme; but on this it is an indispensable ceremony. After washing, libation is made, by pouring out a

small

ſmall portion of the food, in a certain place, for the ſpirits of departed relations, which the natives ſuppoſe to preſide over their conduct, and guard them from evil. They are totally unacquainted with ſtrong or ſpirituous liquours; and their principal beverage is palm wine. This is gotten from a tree of that name by tapping it at the top, and faſtening a large gourd to it; and ſometimes one tree will yield three or four gallons in a night. When juſt drawn it is of a moſt delicious ſweetneſs; but in a few days it acquires a tartiſh and more ſpirituous flavour: though I never ſaw any one intoxicated by it. The ſame tree alſo produces nuts and oil. Our principal luxury is in perfumes; one ſort of theſe is an odoriferous wood of delicious fragrance; the other a kind of earth; a ſmall portion of which thrown into

into the fire diffuses a most powerful odour *. We beat this wood into powder, and mix it with palm oil; with which both men and women perfume themselves.

In our buildings we study convenience rather than ornament. Each master of a family has a large square piece of ground, surrounded with a moat or fence, or enclosed with a wall made of red earth tempered; which, when dry, is as hard as brick. Within this are his houses to accommodate his family and slaves; which, if numerous, frequently present the appearance of a village. In the middle stands the principal building, appropriated to the sole use of the master, and consisting

* When I was in Smyrna I saw the same kind of earth, and brought some of it with me to England; it resembles musk in strength, but is more delicious in scent, and is not unlike the smell of a rose.

of two apartments; in one of which he sits in the day with his family, the other is left apart for the reception of his friends. He has besides these a distinct apartment in which he sleeps, together with his male children. On each side are the apartments of his wives, who have also their separate day and night houses. The habitations of the slaves and their families are distributed throughout the rest of the enclosure. These houses never exceed one story in height: they are always built of wood, or stakes driven into the ground, crossed with wattles, and neatly plastered within, and without. The roof is thatched with reeds. Our day-houses are left open at the sides; but those in which we sleep are always covered, and plastered in the inside, with a composition mixed with cow-dung, to keep off the different insects,

which

which annoy us during the night. The walls and floors alſo of theſe are generally covered with mats. Our beds conſiſt of a platform, raiſed three or four feet from the ground, on which are laid ſkins, and different parts of a ſpungy tree called plaintain. Our covering is calico or muſlin, the ſame as our dreſs. The uſual ſeats are a few logs of wood; but we have benches, which are generally perfumed, to accommodate ſtrangers: theſe compoſe the greater part of our houſehold furniture. Houſes ſo conſtructed and furniſhed require but little ſkill to erect them. Every man is a ſufficient architect for the purpoſe. The whole neighbourhood afford their unanimous aſſiſtance in building them and in return receive, and expect no other recompenſe than a feaſt.

As we live in a country where nature

is

is prodigal of her favours, our wants are few and eafily fupplied; of courfe we have few manufactures. They confift for the moft part of callicoes, earthern ware, ornaments, and inftruments of war and hufbandry. But thefe make no part of our commerce, the principal articles of which, as I have obferved, are provifions. In fuch a ftate money is of little ufe; however we have fome fmall pieces of coin, if I may call them fuch. They are made fomething like an anchor; but I do not remember either their value or denomination. We have alfo markets, at which I have been frequently with my mother. Thefe are fometimes vifited by ftout mahogany-coloured men from the fouth weft of us: we call them Oye-Eboe, which term fignifies red men living at a diftance. They generally bring us fire-arms, gunpowder, hats,

hats, beads, and dried fish. The last we esteemed a great rarity, as our waters were only brooks and springs. These articles they barter with us for odoriferous woods and earth, and our salt of wood ashes. They always carry slaves through our land; but the strictest account is exacted of their manner of procuring them before they are suffered to pass. Sometimes indeed we sold slaves to them, but they were only prisoners of war, or such among us as had been convicted of kidnapping, or adultery, and some other crimes, which we esteemed heinous. This practice of kidnapping induces me to think, that, notwithstanding all our strictness, their principal business among us was to trepan our people. I remember too they carried great sacks along with them, which not long after I had an

opportunity

opportunity of fatally feeing applied to that infamous purpofe.

Our land is uncommonly rich and fruitful, and produces all kinds of vegetables in great abundance. We have plenty of Indian corn, and vaft quantities of cotton and tobacco. Our pine apples grow without culture; they are about the fize of the largeft fugar-loaf, and finely flavoured. We have alfo fpices of different kinds, particularly pepper; and a variety of delicious fruits which I have never feen in Europe; together with gums of various kinds, and honey in abundance. All our induftry is exerted to improve thofe bleffings of nature. Agriculture is our chief employment; and every one, even the children and women, are engaged in it. Thus we are all habituated to labour from our earlieft years. Every one contributes fomething to the common

mon ſtock; and as we are unacquainted with idleneſs, we have no beggars. The benefits of ſuch a mode of living are obvious. The Weſt India planters prefer the ſlaves of Benin or Eboe to thoſe of any other part of Guinea, for their hardineſs, intelligence, integrity, and zeal. Thoſe benefits are felt by us in the general healthineſs of the people, and in their vigour and activity; I might have added too in their comelineſs. Deformity is indeed unknown amongſt us, I mean that of ſhape. Numbers of the natives of Eboe now in London might be brought in ſupport of this aſſertion: for, in regard to complexion, ideas of beauty are wholly relative. I remember while in Africa to have ſeen three negro children, who were tawny, and another quite white, who were univerſally regarded by myſelf, and the natives in general,

general, as far as related to their complexions, as deformed. Our women too were in my eyes at leaſt uncommonly graceful, alert, and modeſt to a degree of baſhfulneſs; nor do I remember to have ever heard of an inſtance of incontinence amongſt them before marriage. They are alſo remarkably cheerful. Indeed cheerfulneſs and affability are two of the leading characteriſtics of our nation.

Our tillage is exerciſed in a large plain or common, ſome hours walk from our dwellings, and all the neighbours reſort thither in a body. They uſe no beaſts of huſbandry; and their only inſtruments are hoes, axes, ſhovels, and beaks, or pointed iron to dig with. Sometimes we are viſited by locuſts, which come in large clouds, ſo as to darken the air, and deſtroy our harveſt. This however happens rarely, but when

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it does, a famine is produced by it. I remember an instance or two wherein this happened. This common is often the theatre of war; and therefore when our people go out to till their land, they not only go in a body, but generally take their arms with them for fear of a surprise; and when they apprehend an invasion they guard the avenues to their dwellings, by driving sticks into the ground, which are so sharp at one end as to pierce the foot, and are generally dipt in poison. From what I can recollect of these battles, they appear to have been irruptions of one little state or district on the other, to obtain prisoners or booty. Perhaps they were incited to this by those traders who brought the European goods I mentioned amongst us. Such a mode of obtaining slaves in Africa is common; and I believe more

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are procured th[illegible] and by kidnapping, than any other *. When a trader wants ſlaves, he applies to a chief for them, and tempts him with his wares. It is not extraordinary, if on this occaſion he yields to the temptation with as little firmneſs, and accepts the price of his fellow creatures liberty with as little reluctance as the enlightened merchant. Accordingly he falls on his neighbours, and a deſperate battle enſues. If he prevails and takes priſoners, he gratifies his avarice by ſelling them: but, if his party be vanquiſhed, and he falls into the hands of the enemy, he is put to death: for, as he has been known to foment their quarrels, it is thought dangerous to let him ſurvive, and no ranſom can ſave him, though all other priſoners may be redeemed. We have fire-arms, bows and arrows, broad two-

* See Benezet's Account of Africa throughout.

edged fwords and javelins: we have fhields alfo which cover a man from head to foot. All are taught the ufe of thefe weapons; even our women are warriors, and march boldly out to fight along with the men. Our whole diftrict is a kind of militia: on a certain fignal given, fuch as the firing of a gun at night, they all rife in arms and rufh upon their enemy. It is perhaps fomething remarkable, that when our people march to the field a red flag or banner is borne before them. I was once a witnefs to a battle in our common. We had been all at work in it one day as ufual, when our people were fuddenly attacked. I climbed a tree at fome diftance, from which I beheld the fight. There were many women as well as men on both fides; among others my mother was there, and armed with a broad fword. After

fighting for a confiderable time with great fury, and after many had been killed our people obtained the victory, and took their enemy's Chief prifoner. He was carried off in great triumph, and, though he offered a large ranfom for his life, he was put to death. A virgin of note among our enemies had been flain in the battle, and her arm was expofed in our market-place, where our trophies were always exhibited. The fpoils were divided according to the merit of the warriors. Thofe prifoners which were not fold or redeemed we kept as flaves: but how different was their condition from that of the flaves in the Weft Indies! With us they do no more work than other members of the community, even their mafters; their food, clothing and lodging were nearly the fame as theirs, (except that they were not permitted to

to eat with those who were free-born); and there was scarce any other difference between them, than a superior degree of importance which the head of a family possesses in our state, and that authority which, as such, he exercises over every part of his household. Some of these slaves have even slaves under them as their own property, and for their own use.

As to religion, the natives believe that there is one Creator of all things, and that he lives in the sun, and is girted round with a belt that he may never eat or drink; but, according to some, he smokes a pipe, which is our own favourite luxury. They believe he governs events, especially our deaths or captivity; but, as for the doctrine of eternity, I do not remember to have ever heard of it: some however believe in the transmigration of souls in

a certain degree. Thoſe ſpirits, which are not tranſmigrated, ſuch as our dear friends or relations, they believe always attend them, and guard them from the bad ſpirits or their foes. For this reaſon they always before eating, as I have obſerved, put ſome ſmall portion of the meat, and pour ſome of their drink, on the ground for them; and they often make oblations of the blood of beaſts or fowls at their graves. I was very fond of my mother, and almoſt conſtantly with her. When ſhe went to make theſe oblations at her mother's tomb, which was a kind of ſmall ſolitary thatched houſe, I ſometimes attended her. There ſhe made her libations, and ſpent moſt of the night in cries and lamentations. I have been often extremely terrified on theſe occaſions. The lonelineſs of the place, the darkneſs of the night, and the cere-

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mony of libation, naturally awful and gloomy, were heightened by my mother's lamentations; and theſe, concurring with the cries of doleful birds, by which theſe places were frequented, gave an inexpreſſible terror to the ſcene.

We compute the year from the day on which the ſun croſſes the line, and on its ſetting that evening there is a general ſhout throughout the land; at leaſt I can ſpeak from my own knowledge throughout our vicinity. The people at the ſame time make a great noiſe with rattles, not unlike the baſket rattles uſed by children here, though much larger, and hold up their hands to heaven for a bleſſing. It is then the greateſt offerings are made; and thoſe children whom our wiſe men foretel will be fortunate are then preſented to different people. I remember

many used to come to see me, and I was carried about to others for that purpose. They have many offerings, particularly at full moons; generally two at harvest before the fruits are taken out of the ground: and when any young animals are killed, sometimes they offer up part of them as a sacrifice. These offerings, when made by one of the heads of a family, serve for the whole. I remember we often had them at my father's and my uncle's, and their families have been present. Some of our offerings are eaten with bitter herbs. We had a saying among us to any one of a cross temper, 'That 'if they were to be eaten, they should 'be eaten with bitter herbs.'

We practised circumcision like the Jews, and made offerings and feasts on that occasion in the same manner as they did. Like them also, our

children

children were named from some event, some circumstance, or fancied foreboding at the time of their birth. I was named *Olaudah*, which, in our language, signifies vicissitude or fortune also, one favoured, and having a loud voice and well spoken. I remember we never polluted the name of the object of our adoration; on the contrary, it was always mentioned with the greatest reverence; and we were totally unacquainted with swearing, and all those terms of abuse and reproach which find their way so readily and copiously into the languages of more civilized people. The only expressions of that kind I remember were, 'May you rot, or 'may you swell, or may a beast take 'you.'

I have before remarked that the natives of this part of Africa are extremely cleanly. This necessary habit of

of decency was with us a part of religion, and therefore we had many purifications and washings; indeed almost as many, and used on the same occasions, if my recollection does not fail me, as the Jews. Those that touched the dead at any time were obliged to wash and purify themselves before they could enter a dwelling-house. Every woman too, at certain times, was forbidden to come into a dwelling-house, or touch any person, or any thing we ate. I was so fond of my mother I could not keep from her, or avoid touching her at some of those periods, in consequence of which I was obliged to be kept out with her, in a little house made for that purpose, till offering was made, and then we were purified.

Though we had no places of public worship, we had priests and magicians, or wise men. I do not remember-

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ber whether they had different offices, or whether they were united in the same persons, but they were held in great reverence by the people. They calculated our time, and foretold events, as their name imported, for we called them Ah-assoe-way-cah, which signifies calculators or yearly men, our year being called Ah-assoe. They wore their beards, and when they died they were succeeded by their sons. Most of their implements and things of value were interred along with them. Pipes and tobacco were also put into the grave with the corpse, which was always perfumed and ornamented, and animals were offered in sacrifice to them. None accompanied their funerals but those of the same profession or tribe. These buried them after sunset, and always returned from the grave by

 a different

a different way from that which they went.

These magicians were also our doctors or physicians. They practised bleeding by cupping; and were very successful in healing wounds and expelling poisons. They had likewise some extraordinary method of discovering jealousy, theft, and poisoning; the success of which no doubt they derived from their unbounded influence over the credulity and superstition of the people. I do not remember what those methods were, except that as to poisoning: I recollect an instance or two, which I hope it will not be deemed impertinent here to insert, as it may serve as a kind of specimen of the rest, and is still used by the negroes in the West Indies. A virgin had been poisoned, but it was not known by whom: the doctors ordered the corpse to be taken up by

some

ſome perſons, and carried to the grave. As ſoon as the bearers had raiſed it on their ſhoulders, they ſeemed ſeized with ſome * ſudden impulſe, and ran to and fro unable to ſtop themſelves. At laſt, after having paſſed through a number of thorns and prickly buſhes unhurt, the corpſe fell from them cloſe to a houſe, and defaced it in the fall; and, the owner being taken up, he immediately confeſſed the poiſoning *.

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* See alſo Leut. Matthew's Voyage, p. 123.

* An inſtance of this kind happened at Montſerrat in the Weſt Indies in th year 1763. I then belonged to the Charming Sally, Capt. Doran.—The chief mate, Mr. Mansfield, and ſome of the crew being one day on ſhore, were preſent at the burying of a poiſoned negro girl. Though they had often heard of the circumſtance of the running in ſuch caſes, and had even ſeen it, they imagined it to be a trick of the corpſe-bearers. The mate therefore deſired two of the ſailors to take up the coffin, and carry it to the grave. The ſailors, who were all of the ſame opinion, readily obeyed; but they had ſcarcely raiſed it to their ſhoulders, before they began to run furiouſly about, quite unable to direct them-ſelves

The natives are extremely cautious about poifon. When they buy any eatable the feller kiffes it all round before the buyer, to fhew him it is not poifoned; and the fame is done when any meat or drink is prefented, particularly to a ftranger. We have ferpents of different kinds, fome of which are efteemed ominous when they appear in our houfes, and thefe we never moleft. I remember two of thofe ominous fnakes, each of which was as thick as the calf of a man's leg, and in colour refembling a dolphin in the water, crept at different times into my

felves, till, at laft, without intention, they came to the hut of him who had poifoned the girl. The coffin then immediately fell from their fhoulders againft the hut, and damaged part of the wall. The owner of the hut was taken into cuftody on this, and confeffed the poifoning.—I give this ftory as it was related by the mate and crew on their return to the fhip. The credit which is due to it I leave with the reader.

mother's

mother's night-house, where I always lay with her, and coiled themſelves into folds, and each time they crowed like a cock. I was deſired by ſome of our wiſe men to touch theſe, that I might be intereſted in the good omens, which I did, for they were quite harmleſs, and would tamely ſuffer themſelves to be handled; and then they were put into a large open earthen pan, and ſet on one ſide of the highway. Some of our ſnakes, however, were poiſonous: one of them croſſed the road one day when I was ſtanding on it, and paſſed between my feet without offering to touch me, to the great ſurpriſe of many who ſaw it; and theſe incidents were accounted by the wiſe men, and therefore by my mother and the reſt of the people, as remarkable omens in my favour.

Such is the imperfect ſketch mem

memory has furniſhed me with of the manners and cuſtoms of a people among whom I firſt drew my breath. And here I cannot forbear ſuggeſting what has long ſtruck me very forcibly, namely, the ſtrong analogy which even by this ſketch, imperfect as it is, appears to prevail in the manners and cuſtoms of my countrymen and thoſe of the Jews, before they reached the Land of Promiſe, and particularly the patriarchs while they were yet in that paſtoral ſtate which is deſcribed in Geneſis—an analogy, which alone would induce me to think that the one people had ſprung from the other. Indeed this is the opinion of Dr. Gill, who, in his commentary on Geneſis, very ably deduces the pedigree of the Africans from Afer and Afra, the deſcendants of Abraham by Keturah his wife and concubine (for both theſe titles are applied

applied to her). It is alſo conformable to the ſentiments of Dr. John Clarke, formerly Dean of Sarum, in his Truth of the Chriſtian Religion: both theſe authors concur in aſcribing to us this original. The reaſonings of theſe gentlemen are ſtill further confirmed by the ſcripture chronology; and if any further corroboration were required, this reſemblance in ſo many reſpects is a ſtrong evidence in ſupport of the opinion. Like the Iſraelites in their primitive ſtate, our government was conducted by our chiefs or judges, our wiſe men and elders; and the head of a family with us enjoyed a ſimilar authority over his houſehold with that which is aſcribed to Abraham and the other patriarchs. The law of retaliation obtained almoſt univerſally with us as with them: and even their religion appeared to have ſhed upon us a ray

its glory, though broken and ſpent in its paſſage, or eclipſed by the cloud with which time, tradition, and ignorance might have enveloped it; for we had our circumciſion (a rule I believe peculiar to that people:) we had alſo our ſacrifices and burnt-offerings, our waſhings and purifications, on the ſame occaſions as they had.

As to the difference of colour between the Eboan Africans and the modern Jews, I ſhall not preſume to account for it. It is a ſubject which has engaged the pens of men of both genius and learning, and is far above my ſtrength. The moſt able and Reverend Mr. T. Clarkſon, however, in his much admired Eſſay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, has aſcertained the cauſe, in a manner that at once ſolves every objection on that account, and, on my mind at leaſt, has

has produced the fulleſt conviction. I ſhall therefore refer to that performance for the theory *, contenting myſelf with extracting a fact as related by Dr. Mitchel †. "The Spaniards, "who have inhabited America, under "the torrid zone, for any time, are "become as dark coloured as our na- "tive Indians of Virginia; of which "*I myſelf have been a witneſs.*" There is alſo another inſtance ‡ of a Portugueſe ſettlement at Mitomba, a river in Sierra Leona; where the inhabitants are bred from a mixture of the firſt Portugueſe diſcoverers with the natives, and are now become in their complexion, and in the woolly quality of their

* Page 178 to 216.

† Philoſ. Tranſ. Nº 476, Sect. 4, cited by Mr. Clarkſon, p. 205.

‡ Same page.

hair,

hair, *perfect negroes*, retaining however a smattering of the Portuguese language.

These instances, and a great many more which might be adduced, while they shew how the complexions of the same persons vary in different climates, it is hoped may tend also to remove the prejudice that some conceive against the natives of Africa on account of their colour. Surely the minds of the Spaniards did not change with their complexion! Are there not causes enough to which the apparent inferiority of an African may be ascribed, without limiting the goodness of God, and supposing he forbore to stamp understanding on certainly his own image, because "carved in ebony." Might it not naturally be ascribed to their situation? When they come among Europeans, they are ignorant of their language,

language, religion, manners, and cuſtoms. Are any pains taken to teach them theſe? Are they treated as men? Does not ſlavery itſelf depreſs the mind, and extinguiſh all its fire and every noble ſentiment? But, above all, what advantages do not a refined people poſſeſs over thoſe who are rude and uncultivated. Let the poliſhed and haughty European recollect that his anceſtors were once, like the Africans, uncivilized, and even barbarous. Did Nature make *them* inferior to their ſons? and ſhould *they too* have been made ſlaves? Every rational mind anſwers, No. Let ſuch reflections as theſe melt the pride of their ſuperiority into ſympathy for the wants and miſeries of their ſable brethren, and compel them to acknowledge, that underſtanding is not confined to feature or colour. If, when they look round the world,

world, they feel exultation, let it be tempered with benevolence to others, and gratitude to God, "who hath "made of one blood all nations of "men for to dwell on all the face of "the earth *; and whose wisdom is "not our wisdom, neither are our "ways his ways."

* Acts, c. xvii. v. 26.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The author's birth and parentage—His being kidnapped with his fifter—Their feparation—Surprife at meeting again—Are finally feparated—Account of the different places and incidents the author met with till his arrival on the coaft—The effect the fight of a flave fhip had on him—He fails for the Weft Indies—Horrors of a flave fhip—Arrives at Barbadoes, where the cargo is fold and difperfed.

I HOPE the reader will not think I have trefpaffed on his patience in introducing myfelf to him with fome account of the manners and cuftoms of my country. They had been im-

planted

planted in me with great care, and made an impreffion on my mind, which time could not erafe, and which all the adverfity and variety of fortune I have fince experienced ferved only to rivet and record; for, whether the love of one's country be real or imaginary, or a leffon of reafon, or an inftinct of nature, I ftill look back with pleafure on the firft fcenes of my life, though that pleafure has been for the moft part mingled with forrow.

I have already acquainted the reader with the time and place of my birth. My father, befides many flaves, had a numerous family, of which feven lived to grow up, including myfelf and a fifter, who was the only daughter. As I was the youngeft of the fons, I became, of courfe, the greateft favourite with my mother, and was always with her; and fhe ufed to take particular

pains

pains to form my mind. I was trained up from my earlieſt years in the art of war; my daily exerciſe was ſhooting and throwing javelins; and my mother adorned me with emblems, after the manner of our greateſt warriors. In this way I grew up till I was turned the age of eleven, when an end was put to my happineſs in the following manner:— Generally when the grown people in the neighbourhood were gone far in the fields to labour, the children aſſembled together in ſome of the neighbours' premiſes to play; and commonly ſome of us uſed to get up a tree to look out for any aſſailant, or kidnapper, that might come upon us; for they ſome-times took thoſe opportunities of our parents' abſence to attack and carry off as many as they could ſeize. One day, as I was watching at the top of a tree in our yard, I ſaw one of thoſe people

come into the yard of our next neighbour but one, to kidnap, there being many ſtout young people in it. Immediately on this I gave the alarm of the rogue, and he was ſurrounded by the ſtouteſt of them, who entangled him with cords, ſo that he could not eſcape till ſome of the grown people came and ſecured him. But alas! ere long it was my fate to be thus attacked, and to be carried off, when none of the grown people were nigh. One day, when all our people were gone out to their works as uſual, and only I and my dear ſiſter were left to mind the houſe, two men and a woman got over our walls, and in a moment ſeized us both, and, without giving us time to cry out, or make reſiſtance, they ſtopped our mouths, and ran off with us into the neareſt wood. Here they tied our hands, and continued to carry us as far

far as they could, till night came on, when we reached a ſmall houſe, where the robbers halted for refreſhment and ſpent the night. We were then unbound, but were unable to take any food; and, being quite overpowered by fatigue and grief, our only relief was ſome ſleep, which allayed our misfortune for a ſhort time. The next morning we left the houſe, and continued travelling all the day. For a long time we had kept the woods, but at laſt we came into a road which I believed I knew. I had now ſome hopes of being delivered; for we had advanced but a little way before I diſcovered ſome people at a diſtance, on which I began to cry out for their aſſiſtance; but my cries had no other effect than to make them tie me faſter and ſtop my mouth, and then they put me into a large ſack. They alſo

ftopped my fifter's mouth, and tied her hands; and in this manner we proceeded till we were out of the fight of thefe people. When we went to reft the following night they offered us fome victuals; but we refufed it; and the only comfort we had was in being in one another's arms all that night, and bathing each other with our tears. But alas! we were foon deprived of even the fmall comfort of weeping together. The next day proved a day of greater forrow than I had yet experienced; for my fifter and I were then feparated, while we lay clafped in each others arms. It was in vain that we befought them not to part us; fhe was torn from me, and immediately carried away, while I was left in a ftate of diftraction not to be defcribed. I cried and grieved continually; and for feveral days did not

eat

eat any thing but what they forced into my mouth. At length, after many days travelling, during which I had often changed masters, I got into the hands of a chieftain, in a very pleasant country. This man had two wives and some children, and they all used me extremely well, and did all they could to comfort me; particularly the first wife, who was something like my mother. Although I was a great many days journey from my father's house, yet these people spoke exactly the same language with us. This first master of mine, as I may call him, was a smith, and my principal employment was working his bellows, which were the same kind as I had seen in my vicinity. They were in some respects not unlike the stoves here in gentlemen's kitchens; and were covered over with leather; and in the

middle of that leather a ſtick was fixed, and a perſon ſtood up, and worked it, in the ſame manner as is done to pump water out of a caſk with a hand pump. I believe it was gold he worked, for it was of a lovely bright yellow colour, and was worn by the women on their wriſts and ancles. I was there I ſuppoſe about a month, and they at laſt uſed to truſt me ſome little diſtance from the houſe. This liberty I uſed in embracing every opportunity to inquire the way to my own home: and I alſo ſometimes, for the ſame purpoſe, went with the maidens, in the cool of the evenings, to bring pitchers of water from the ſprings for the uſe of the houſe. I had alſo remarked where the ſun roſe in the morning, and ſet in the evening, as I had travelled along; and I had obſerved that my father's houſe was towards the

riſing

rising of the sun. I therefore determined to seize the first opportunity of making my escape, and to shape my course for that quarter; for I was quite oppressed and weighed down by grief after my mother and friends; and my love of liberty, ever great, was strengthened by the mortifying circumstance of not daring to eat with the free-born children, although I was mostly their companion. While I was projecting my escape, one day an unlucky event happened, which quite disconcerted my plan, and put an end to my hopes. I used to be sometimes employed in assisting an elderly woman slave, to cook and take care of the poultry: and one morning, while I was feeding some chickens, I happened to toss a small pebble at one of them, which hit it on the middle, and directly killed it. The old slave, having

ſoon after miſſed the chicken, inquired after it; and on my relating the accident (for I told her the truth, becauſe my mother would never ſuffer me to tell a lie) ſhe flew into a violent paſſion, threatened that I ſhould ſuffer for it; and, my maſter being out, ſhe immediately went and told her miſtreſs what I had done. This alarmed me very much, and I expected an inſtant flogging, which to me was uncommonly dreadful; for I had ſeldom been beaten at home. I therefore reſolved to fly; and accordingly I ran into a thicket that was hard by, and hid myſelf in the buſhes. Soon afterwards my miſtreſs and the ſlave returned, and, not ſeeing me, they ſearched all the houſe, but not finding me, and I not making anſwer when they called to me, they thought I had run away, and the whole neigh-

bourhood was raised in the purfuit of me. In that part of the country (as in ours) the houfes and villages were fkirted with woods, or fhrubberies, and the bufhes were fo thick that a man could readily conceal himfelf in them, fo as to elude the ftricteft fearch. The neighbours continued the whole day looking for me, and feveral times many of them came within a few yards of the place where I lay hid. I expected every moment, when I heard a ruftling among the trees, to be found out, and punifhed by my mafter: but they never difcovered me, though they were often fo near that I even heard their conjectures as they were looking about for me; and I now learned from them, that any attempt to return home would be hopelefs. Moft of them fuppofed I had fled towards home;

but the diftance was fo great, and the way fo intricate, that they thought I could never reach it, and that I fhould be loft in the woods. When I heard this I was feized with a violent panic, and abandoned myfelf to defpair. Night too began to approach, and aggravated all my fears. I had before entertained hopes of getting home, and had determined when it fhould be dark to make the attempt; but I was now convinced it was fruitlefs, and began to confider that, if poffibly I could efcape all other animals, I could not thofe of the human kind; and that, not knowing the way, I muft perifh in the woods. Thus was I like the hunted deer:

——"Ev'ry leaf and ev'ry whifp'ring breath
"Convey'd a foe, and ev'ry foe a death."

I heard frequent ruftlings among the leaves; and being pretty fure they were

fnakes,

ſnakes, I expected every inſtant to be ſtung by them. This increaſed my anguiſh, and the horror of my ſituation became now quite inſupportable. I at length quitted the thicket, very faint and hungry, for I had not eaten or drank any thing all the day; and crept to my maſter's kitchen, from whence I ſet out at firſt, and which was an open ſhed, and laid myſelf down in the aſhes with an anxious wiſh for death to relieve me from all my pains. I was ſcarcely awake in the morning, when the old woman ſlave, who was the firſt up, came to light the fire, and ſaw me in the fire place. She was very much ſurpriſed to ſee me, and could ſcarcely believe her own eyes. She now promiſed to intercede for me, and went for her maſter, who ſoon after came, and, having ſlightly reprimanded

me, ordered me to be taken care of, and not ill treated.

Soon after this my master's only daughter, and child by his first wife, sickened and died, which affected him so much that for some time he was almost frantic, and really would have killed himself, had he not been watched and prevented. However, in a small time afterwards he recovered, and I was again sold. I was now carried to the left of the sun's rising, through many dreary wastes and dismal woods, amidst the hideous roarings of wild beasts. The people I was sold to used to carry me very often, when I was tired, either on their shoulders or on their backs. I saw many convenient well-built sheds along the road, at proper distances, to accommodate the merchants and travellers, who lay in those buildings along with their

their wives, who often accompany them; and they always go well armed.

From the time I left my own nation I always found somebody that understood me till I came to the sea coast. The languages of different nations did not totally differ, nor were they so copious as those of the Europeans, particularly the English. They were therefore easily learned; and, while I was journeying thus through Africa, I acquired two or three different tongues. In this manner I had been travelling for a considerable time, when one evening to my great surprise, whom should I see brought to the house where I was but my dear sister! As soon as she saw me she gave a loud shriek, and ran into my arms—I was quite overpowered: neither of us could speak; but, for a considerable time,

 clung

clung to each other in mutual embraces, unable to do any thing but weep. Our meeting affected all who saw us; and indeed I must acknowledge, in honour of those sable destroyers of human rights, that I never met with any ill treatment, or saw any offered to their slaves, except tying them, when necessary, to keep them from running away. When these people knew we were brother and sister, they indulged us to be together; and the man, to whom I supposed we belonged, lay with us, he in the middle, while she and I held one another by the hands across his breast all night; and thus for a while we forgot our misfortunes in the joy of being together: but even this small comfort was soon to have an end; for scarcely had the fatal morning appeared, when she was again torn from me for ever! I was now more miserable, if

if poſſible, than before. The ſmall relief which her preſence gave me from pain was gone, and the wretchedneſs of my ſituation was redoubled by my anxiety after her fate, and my apprehenſions leſt her ſufferings ſhould be greater than mine, when I could not be with her to alleviate them. Yes, thou dear partner of all my childiſh ſports! thou ſharer of my joys and ſorrows! happy ſhould I have ever eſteemed myſelf to encounter every miſery for you, and to procure your freedom by the ſacrifice of my own. Though you were early forced from my arms, your image has been always rivetted in my heart, from which neither *time nor fortune* have been able to remove it; ſo that, while the thoughts of your ſufferings have damped my proſperity, they have mingled with adverſity and increaſed its bitterneſs.

To

To that Heaven which protects the weak from the strong, I commit the care of your innocence and virtues, if they have not already received their full reward, and if your youth and delicacy have not long since fallen victims to the violence of the African trader, the pestilential stench of a Guinea ship, the seasoning in the European colonies, or the lash and lust of a brutal and unrelenting overseer.

I did not long remain after my sister. I was again sold, and carried through a number of places, till, after travelling a considerable time, I came to a town called Tinmah, in the most beautiful country I had yet seen in Africa. It was extremely rich, and there were many rivulets which flowed through it, and supplied a large pond in the centre of the town, where the people washed. Here I first saw and tasted cocoa nuts, which

which I thought superior to any nuts I had ever tasted before; and the trees, which were loaded, were also interspersed amongst the houses, which had commodious shades adjoining, and were in the same manner as ours, the insides being neatly plastered and whitewashed. Here I also saw and tasted for the first time sugar-cane. Their money consisted of little white shells, the size of the finger nail. I was sold here for one hundred and seventy-two of them by a merchant who lived and brought me there. I had been about two or three days at his house, when a wealthy widow, a neighbour of his, came there one evening, and brought with her an only son, a young gentleman about my own age and size. Here they saw me; and, having taken a fancy to me, I was bought of the merchant, and went home with them. Her house and

premises

premises were situated close to one of those rivulets I have mentioned, and were the finest I ever saw in Africa: they were very extensive, and she had a number of slaves to attend her. The next day I was washed and perfumed, and when meal-time came, I was led into the presence of my mistress, and eat and drank before her with her son. This filled me with astonishment; and I could scarce help expressing my surprise that the young gentleman should suffer me, who was bound, to eat with him who was free; and not only so, but that he would not at any time either eat or drink till I had taken first, because I was the eldest, which was agreeable to our custom. Indeed every thing here, and all their treatment of me, made me forget that I was a slave. The language of these people resembled ours so nearly, that we understood each

each other perfectly. They had also the very same customs as we. There were likewise slaves daily to attend us, while my young master and I with other boys sported with our darts and bows and arrows, as I had been used to do at home. In this resemblance to my former happy state, I passed about two months; and I now began to think I was to be adopted into the family, and was beginning to be reconciled to my situation, and to forget by degrees my misfortunes, when all at once the delusion vanished; for, without the least previous knowledge, one morning early, while my dear master and companion was still asleep, I was awakened out of my reverie to fresh sorrow, and hurried away even amongst the uncircumcised.

Thus, at the very moment I dreamed of the greatest happiness, I found myself

felf moft miferable; and it feemed as if fortune wifhed to give me this tafte of joy, only to render the reverfe more poignant. The change I now experienced was as painful as it was fudden and unexpected. It was a change indeed from a ftate of blifs to a fcene which is inexpreffible by me, as it difcovered to me an element I had never before beheld, and till then had no idea of, and wherein fuch inftances of hardfhip and cruelty continually occurred as I can never reflect on but with horror.

All the nations and people I had hitherto paffed through refembled our own in their manners, cuftoms, and language: but I came at length to a country, the inhabitants of which differed from us in all thofe particulars. I was very much ftruck with this difference, efpecially when I came among

a people

a people who did not circumcise, and eat without washing their hands. They cooked also in iron pots, and had European cutlasses and cross bows, which were unknown to us, and fought with their fists amongst themselves. Their women were not so modest as ours, for they eat, and drank, and slept, with their men. But above all, I was amazed to see no sacrifices or offerings among them. In some of those places the people ornamented themselves with scars, and likewise filed their teeth very sharp. They wanted sometimes to ornament me in the same manner, but I would not suffer them; hoping that I might some time be among a people who did not thus disfigure themselves, as I thought they did. At last I came to the banks of a large river, which was covered with canoes, in which the people appeared to live

with

with their houfehold utenfils and provifions of all kinds. I was beyond meafure aftonifhed at this, as I had never before feen any water larger than a pond or a rivulet: and my furprife was mingled with no fmall fear when I was put into one of thefe canoes, and we began to paddle and move along the river. We continued going on thus till night; and when we came to land, and made fires on the banks, each family by themfelves, fome dragged their canoes on fhore, others ftayed and cooked in theirs, and laid in them all night. Thofe on the land had mats, of which they made tents, fome in the fhape of little houfes: in thefe we flept: and after the morning meal, we embarked again and proceeded as before. I was often very much aftonifhed to fee fome of the women, as well as the men, jump into the water, dive to the

bottom, come up again, and swim about. Thus I continued to travel, sometimes by land, sometimes by water, through different countries and various nations, till, at the end of six or seven months after I had been kidnapped, I arrived at the sea coast. It would be tedious and uninteresting to relate all the incidents which befell me during this journey, and which I have not yet forgotten; of the various hands I passed through, and the manners and customs of all the different people among whom I lived: I shall therefore only observe, that in all the places where I was, the soil was exceedingly rich; the pomkins, aedas, plantains, yams, &c. &c. were in great abundance, and of incredible size. There were also vast quantities of different gums, though not used for any purpose; and every where a great deal of tobacco.

tobacco. The cotton even grew quite wild; and there was plenty of red-wood. I saw no mechanics whatever in all the way, except such as I have mentioned. The chief employment in all these countries was agriculture, and both the males and females, as with us, were brought up to it, and trained in the arts of war.

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled, and tossed up to see if I were sound, by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions too differing

differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spoke, (which was very different from any I had ever heard) united to confirm me in this belief. Indeed such were the horrors of my views and fears at the moment, that, if ten thousand worlds had been my own, I would have freely parted with them all to have exchanged my condition with that of the meanest slave in my own country. When I looked round the ship too and saw a large furnace or copper boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate; and, quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. When I recovered a little I found some black people about me, who I believed were some

some of those who brought me on board, and had been receiving their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but all in vain. I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces, and long hair. They told me I was not: and one of the crew brought me a small portion of spirituous liquor in a wine glass; but, being afraid of him, I would not take it out of his hand. One of the blacks therefore took it from him and gave it to me, and I took a little down my palate, which, instead of reviving me, as they thought it would, threw me into the greatest consternation at the strange feeling it produced, having never tasted any such liquor before. Soon after this the blacks who brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair. I now saw myself deprived of

of all chance of returning to my native country, or even the leaſt glimpſe of hope of gaining the ſhore, which I now conſidered as friendly; and I even wiſhed for my former ſlavery in preference to my preſent ſituation, which was filled with horrors of every kind, ſtill heightened by my ignorance of what I was to undergo. I was not long ſuffered to indulge my grief; I was ſoon put down under the decks, and there I received ſuch a ſalutation in my noſtrils as I had never experienced in my life: ſo that, with the loathſomeneſs of the ſtench, and crying together, I became ſo ſick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the leaſt deſire to taſte any thing. I now wiſhed for the laſt friend, death, to relieve me; but ſoon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refuſing to eat,

 one

one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me acrofs I think the windlafs, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me feverely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before; and although, not being ufed to the water, I naturally feared that element the firft time I faw it, yet neverthelefs, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the fide, but I could not; and, befides, the crew ufed to watch us very clofely who were not chained down to the decks, left we fhould leap into the water: and I have feen fome of thefe poor African prifoners moft feverely cut for attempting to do fo, and hourly whipped for not eating. This indeed was often the cafe with myfelf. In a little time after, amongft the poor chained men, I found fome of my own nation, which in a fmall degree gave eafe to my mind. I

inquired

inquired of these what was to be done with us; they gave me to understand we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived, and thought, if it were no worse than working, my situation was not so desperate: but still I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner; for I had never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty; and this not only shewn towards us blacks, but also to some of the whites themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we were permitted to be on deck, flogged so unmercifully with a large rope near the foremast, that he died in consequence of it; and they tossed him over the side as they would have done a brute. This made me fear these people the more; and I ex-

pected nothing less than to be treated in the same manner. I could not help expressing my fears and apprehensions to some of my countrymen: I asked them if these people had no country, but lived in this hollow place (the ship): they told me they did not, but came from a distant one. 'Then,' said I, 'how comes it in all our country we 'never heard of them?' They told me because they lived so very far off. I then asked where were their women? had they any like themselves? I was told they had: 'and why,' said I, 'do we 'not see them?' they answered, because they were left behind. I asked how the vessel could go? they told me they could not tell; but that there were cloths put upon the masts by the help of the ropes I saw, and then the vessel went on; and the white men had some spell or magic they put in the water

when

when they liked in order to ſtop the veſſel. I was exceedingly amazed at this account, and really thought they were ſpirits. I therefore wiſhed much to be from amongſt them, for I expected they would ſacrifice me: but my wiſhes were vain; for we were ſo quartered that it was impoſſible for any of us to make our eſcape. While we ſtayed on the coaſt I was moſtly on deck; and one day, to my great aſtoniſhment, I ſaw one of theſe veſſels coming in with the ſails up. As ſoon as the whites ſaw it, they gave a great ſhout, at which we were amazed; and the more ſo as the veſſel appeared larger by approaching nearer. At laſt ſhe came to an anchor in my ſight, and when the anchor was let go I and my countrymen who ſaw it were loſt in aſtoniſhment to obſerve the veſſel ſtop; and were now convinced it was

 done

done by magic. Soon after this the other ſhip got her boats out, and they came on board of us, and the people of both ſhips ſeemed very glad to ſee each other. Several of the ſtrangers alſo ſhook hands with us black people, and made motions with their hands, ſignifying I ſuppoſe we were to go to their country; but we did not underſtand them. At laſt, when the ſhip we were in had got in all her cargo, they made ready with many fearful noiſes, and we were all put under deck, ſo that we could not ſee how they managed the veſſel. But this diſappointment was the leaſt of my ſorrow. The ſtench of the hold while we were on the coaſt was ſo intolerably loathſome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and ſome of us had been permitted to ſtay on the deck for the freſh air; but now that the whole ſhip's cargo were

confined

confined together, it became abſolutely peſtilential. The cloſeneſs of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ſhip, which was ſo crowded that each had ſcarcely room to turn himſelf, almoſt ſuffocated us. This produced copious perſpirations, ſo that the air ſoon became unfit for reſpiration, from a variety of loathſome ſmells, and brought on a ſickneſs among the ſlaves, of which many died, thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchaſers. This wretched ſituation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become inſupportable; and the filth of the neceſſary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almoſt ſuffocated. The ſhrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a ſcene of horror almoſt inconceivable. Happily perhaps

for myſelf I was ſoon reduced ſo low here that it was thought neceſſary to keep me almoſt always on deck ; and from my extreme youth I was not put in fetters. In this ſituation I expected every hour to ſhare the fate of my companions, ſome of whom were almoſt daily brought upon deck at the point of death, which I began to hope would ſoon put an end to my miſeries. Often did I think many of the inhabitants of the deep much more happy than myſelf. I envied them the freedom they enjoyed, and as often wiſhed I could change my condition for theirs. Every circumſtance I met with ſerved only to render my ſtate more painful, and heighten my apprehenſions, and my opinion of the cruelty of the whites. One day they had taken a number of fiſhes; and when they had killed and ſatisfied themſelves with as many as

they thought fit, to our astonishment who were on the deck, rather than give any of them to us to eat as we expected, they tossed the remaining fish into the sea again, although we begged and prayed for some as well as we could, but in vain; and some of my countrymen, being pressed by hunger, took an opportunity, when they thought no one saw them, of trying to get a little privately; but they were discovered, and the attempt procured them some very severe floggings. One day, when we had a smooth sea and moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings and jumped into the sea: immediately another quite dejected fellow, who, on account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons,

alfo followed their example; and I be-lieve many more would very foon have done the fame if they had not been pre-vented by the fhip's crew, who were inftantly alarmed. Thofe of us that were the moft active were in a moment put down under the deck, and there was fuch a noife and confufion amongft the people of the fhip as I never heard before, to ftop her, and get the boat out to go after the flaves. However two of the wretches were drowned, but they got the other, and afterwards flogged him unmercifully for thus at-tempting to prefer death to flavery. In this manner we continued to under-go more hardfhips than I can now relate, hardfhips which are infeparable from this accurfed trade. Many a time we were near fuffocation from the want of frefh air, which we were often without for whole days together. This,

and

and the ſtench of the neceſſary tubs, carried off many. During our paſſage I firſt ſaw flying fiſhes, which ſurpriſed me very much: they uſed frequently to fly acroſs the ſhip, and many of them fell on the deck. I alſo now firſt ſaw the uſe of the quadrant; I had often with aſtoniſhment ſeen the mariners make obſervations with it, and I could not think what it meant. They at laſt took notice of my ſurpriſe; and one of them, willing to increaſe it, as well as to gratify my curioſity, made me one day look through it. The clouds appeared to me to be land, which diſappeared as they paſſed along. This heightened my wonder; and I was now more perſuaded than ever that I was in another world, and that every thing about me was magic. At laſt we came in ſight of the iſland of Barbadoes, at which the whites on board gave a great

ſhout, and made many ſigns of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this; but as the veſſel drew nearer we plainly ſaw the harbour, and other ſhips of different kinds and ſizes; and we ſoon anchored amongſt them off Bridge Town. Many merchants and planters now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in ſeparate parcels, and examined us attentively. They alſo made us jump, and pointed to the land, ſignifying we were to go there. We thought by this we ſhould be eaten by theſe ugly men, as they appeared to us; and, when ſoon after we were all put down under the deck again, there was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be heard all the night from theſe apprehenſions, inſomuch that at laſt the white people got ſome old ſlaves from the land to pacify us. They told

told us we were not to be eaten, but to work, and were ſoon to go on land, where we ſhould ſee many of our country people. This report eaſed us much; and ſure enough, ſoon after we were landed, there came to us Africans of all languages. We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like ſo many ſheep in a fold, without regard to ſex or age. As every object was new to me every thing I ſaw filled me with ſurpriſe. What ſtruck me firſt was that the houſes were built with ſtories, and in every other reſpect different from thoſe in Africa: but I was ſtill more aſtoniſhed on ſeeing people on horſeback. I did not know what this could mean; and indeed I thought theſe people were full of nothing but magical arts. While I was in this aſtoniſhment one of my fellow

fellow prisoners spoke to a countryman of his about the horses, who said they were the same kind they had in their country. I understood them, though they were from a distant part of Africa, and I thought it odd I had not seen any horses there; but afterwards, when I came to converse with different Africans, I found they had many horses amongst them, and much larger than those I then saw. We were not many days in the merchant's custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this:—On a signal given, (as the beat of a drum) the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best. The noise and clamour with which this is attended, and the eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers, serve not a little to increase the apprehensions of the terrified

terrified Africans, who may well be ſuppoſed to conſider them as the miniſters of that deſtruction to which they think themſelves devoted. In this manner, without ſcruple, are relations and friends ſeparated, moſt of them never to ſee each other again. I remember in the veſſel in which I was brought over, in the men's apartment, there were ſeveral brothers, who, in the ſale, were ſold in different lots; and it was very moving on this occaſion to ſee and hear their cries at parting. O, ye nominal Chriſtians! might not an African aſk you, learned you this from your God, who ſays unto you, Do unto all men as you would men ſhould do unto you? Is it not enough that we are torn from our country and friends to toil for your luxury and luſt of gain? Muſt every tender feeling be likewiſe ſacrificed to your avarice?

Are the dearest friends and relations, now rendered more dear by their separation from their kindred, still to be parted from each other, and thus prevented from cheering the gloom of slavery with the small comfort of being together and mingling their sufferings and sorrows? Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters, or husbands their wives? Surely this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress, and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The author is carried to Virginia—His distress—Surprise at seeing a picture and a watch—Is bought by Captain Pascal, and sets out for England—His terror during the voyage—Arrives in England—His wonder at a fall of snow—Is sent to Guernsey, and in some time goes on board a ship of war with his master—Some account of the expedition against Louisbourg under the command of Admiral Boscawen, in 1758.

I NOW totally lost the small remains of comfort I had enjoyed in conversing with my countrymen; the women too, who used to wash and take care of me, were all gone different ways,

ways, and I never ſaw one of them afterwards.

I ſtayed in this iſland for a few days; I believe it could not be above a fortnight; when I and ſome few more ſlaves, that were not ſaleable amongſt the reſt, from very much fretting, were ſhipped off in a ſloop for North America. On the paſſage we were better treated than when we were coming from Africa, and we had plenty of rice and fat pork. We were landed up a river a good way from the ſea, about Virginia county, where we ſaw few or none of our native Africans, and not one ſoul who could talk to me. I was a few weeks weeding graſs, and gathering ſtones in a plantation; and at laſt all my companions were diſtributed different ways, and only myſelf was left. I was now exceedingly miſerable, and thought myſelf worſe off than

than any of the reſt of my companions; for they could talk to each other, but I had no perſon to ſpeak to that I could underſtand. In this ſtate I was conſtantly grieving and pining, and wiſhing for death rather than any thing elſe. While I was in this plantation the gentleman, to whom I ſuppoſe the eſtate belonged, being unwell, I was one day ſent for to his dwelling houſe to fan him; when I came into the room where he was I was very much affrighted at ſome things I ſaw, and the more ſo as I had ſeen a black woman ſlave as I came through the houſe, who was cooking the dinner, and the poor creature was cruelly loaded with various kinds of iron machines; ſhe had one particularly on her head, which locked her mouth ſo faſt that ſhe could ſcarcely ſpeak; and could not eat nor drink. I was much aſtoniſhed and ſhocked at

this contrivance, which I afterwards learned was called the iron muzzle. Soon after I had a fan put into my hand, to fan the gentleman while he ſlept; and ſo I did indeed with great fear. While he was faſt aſleep I indulged myſelf a great deal in looking about the room, which to me appeared very fine and curious. The firſt object that engaged my attention was a watch which hung on the chimney, and was going. I was quite ſurpriſed at the noiſe it made, and was afraid it would tell the gentleman any thing I might do amiſs: and when I immediately after obſerved a picture hanging in the room, which appeared conſtantly to look at me, I was ſtill more affrighted, having never ſeen ſuch things as theſe before. At one time I thought it was ſomething relative to magic; and not ſeeing it move I thought it might be ſome way

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the whites had to keep their great men when they died, and offer them libation as we uſed to do to our friendly ſpirits. In this ſtate of anxiety I remained till my maſter awoke, when I was diſmiſſed out of the room, to my no ſmall ſatisfaction and relief; for I thought that theſe people were all made up of wonders. In this place I was called Jacob; but on board the African ſnow I was called Michael. I had been ſome time in this miſerable, forlorn, and much dejected ſtate, without having any one to talk to, which made my life a burden, when the kind and unknown hand of the Creator (who in very deed leads the blind in a way they know not) now began to appear, to my comfort; for one day the captain of a merchant ſhip, called the Induſtrious Bee, came on ſome buſineſs to my maſter's houſe. This gentleman, whoſe name was Michael

chael Henry *Pascal*, was a lieutenant in the royal navy, but now commanded this trading ship, which was somewhere in the confines of the county many miles off. While he was at my master's house it happened that he saw me, and liked me so well that he made a purchase of me. I think I have often heard him say he gave thirty or forty pounds sterling for me; but I do not now remember which. However, he meant me for a present to some of his friends in England: and I was sent accordingly from the house of my then master, one Mr. Campbell, to the place where the ship lay; I was conducted on horseback by an elderly black man, (a mode of travelling which appeared very odd to me). When I arrived I was carried on board a fine large ship, loaded with tobacco, &c. and just ready to sail for England.

I now

I now thought my condition much mended; I had fails to lie on, and plenty of good victuals to eat; and every body on board ufed me very kindly, quite contrary to what I had feen of any white people before; I therefore began to think that they were not all of the fame difpofition. A few days after I was on board we failed for England. I was ftill at a lofs to conjecture my deftiny. By this time, however, I could fmatter a little imperfect Englifh; and I wanted to know as well as I could where we were going. Some of the people of the fhip ufed to tell me they were going to carry me back to my own country, and this made me very happy. I was quite rejoiced at the found of going back; and thought if I fhould get home what wonders I fhould have to tell. But I was referved for another fate,

fate, and was soon undeceived when we came within sight of the English coast. While I was on board this ship, my captain and master named me *Gustavus Vasa*. I at that time began to understand him a little, and refused to be called so, and told him as well as I could that I would be called Jacob; but he said I should not, and still called me Gustavus; and when I refused to answer to my new name, which at first I did, it gained me many a cuff; so at length I submitted, and was obliged to bear the present name, by which I have been known ever since. The ship had a very long passage; and on that account we had very short allowance of provisions. Towards the last we had only one pound and a half of bread per week, and about the same quantity of meat, and one quart of water a-day. We spoke with only one vessel the whole time we were at

at ſea, and but once we caught a few fiſhes. In our extremities the captain and people told me in jeſt they would kill and eat me; but I thought them in earneſt, and was depreſſed beyond meaſure, expecting every moment to be my laſt. While I was in this ſituation one evening they caught, with a good deal of trouble, a large ſhark, and got it on board. This gladdened my poor heart exceedingly, as I thought it would ſerve the people to eat inſtead of their eating me; but very ſoon, to my aſtoniſhment, they cut off a ſmall part of the tail, and toſſed the reſt over the ſide. This renewed my conſternation; and I did not know what to think of theſe white people, though I very much feared they would kill and eat me. There was on board the ſhip a young lad who had never been at ſea before, about

four or five years older than myſelf; his name was Richard Baker. He was a native of America, had received an excellent education, and was of a moſt amiable temper. Soon after I went on board he ſhewed me a great deal of partiality and attention, and in return I grew extremely fond of him. We at length became inſeparable; and, for the ſpace of two years, he was of very great uſe to me, and was my conſtant companion and inſtructor. Although this dear youth had many ſlaves of his own, yet he and I have gone through many ſufferings together on ſhipboard; and we have many nights lain in each other's boſoms when we were in great diſtreſs. Thus ſuch a friendſhip was cemented between us as we cheriſhed till his death, which, to my very great ſorrow, happened in the year 1759, when he was up the

Archipelago,

Archipelago, on board his majesty's ship the Preston: an event which I have never ceased to regret, as I lost at once a kind interpreter, an agreeable companion, and a faithful friend; who, at the age of fifteen, discovered a mind superior to prejudice; and who was not ashamed to notice, to associate with, and to be the friend and instructor of one who was ignorant, a stranger, of a different complexion, and a slave! My master had lodged in his mother's house in America: he respected him very much, and made him always eat with him in the cabin. He used often to tell him jocularly that he would kill me to eat. Sometimes he would say to me—the black people were not good to eat, and would ask me if we did not eat people in my country. I said, No: then he said he would kill Dick (as he always called him) first,

and afterwards me. Though this hearing relieved my mind a little as to myself, I was alarmed for Dick and whenever he was called I used to be very much afraid he was to be killed; and I would peep and watch to see if they were going to kill him: nor was I free from this consternation till we made the land. One night we lost a man overboard; and the cries and noise were so great and confused, in stopping the ship, that I, who did not know what was the matter, began, as usual, to be very much afraid, and to think they were going to make an offering with me, and perform some magic; which I still believed they dealt in. As the waves were very high I thought the Ruler of the seas was angry, and I expected to be offered up to appease him. This filled my mind with agony, and I could not any more

that

that night close my eyes again to rest. However, when daylight appeared I was a little eased in my mind; but still every time I was called I used to think it was to be killed. Some time after this we saw some very large fish, which I afterwards found were called grampusses. They looked to me extremely terrible, and made their appearance just at dusk; and were so near as to blow the water on the ship's deck. I believed them to be the rulers of the sea; and, as the white people did not make any offerings at any time, I thought they were angry with them: and, at last, what confirmed my belief was, the wind just then died away, and a calm ensued, and in consequence of it the ship stopped going? I supposed that the fish had performed this, and I hid myself in the fore part of the ship, through fear of be-

ing offered up to appeafe them, every minute peeping and quaking: but my good friend Dick came fhortly towards me, and I took an opportunity to afk him, as well as I could, what thefe fifh were. Not being able to talk much Englifh, I could but juft make him underftand my queftion; and not at all, when I afked him if any offerings were to be made to them: however, he told me thefe fifh would fwallow any body; which fufficiently alarmed me. Here he was called away by the captain, who was leaning over the quarter-deck railing and looking at the fifh; and moft of the people were bufied in getting a barrel of pitch to light, for them to play with. The captain now called me to him, having learned fome of my apprehenfions from Dick; and having diverted himfelf and others for fome time with my fears,

which

which appeared ludicrous enough in my crying and trembling, he dismissed me. The barrel of pitch was now lighted and put over the side into the water: by this time it was just dark, and the fish went after it; and, to my great joy, I saw them no more.

However, all my alarms began to subside when we got sight of land; and at last the ship arrived at Falmouth, after a passage of thirteen weeks. Every heart on board seemed gladdened on our reaching the shore, and none more than mine. The captain immediately went on shore, and sent on board some fresh provisions, which we wanted very much: we made good use of them, and our famine was soon turned into feasting, almost without ending. It was about the beginning of the spring 1757 when I arrived in England, and I was near twelve years of age at that

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time. I was very much ſtruck with the buildings and the pavement of the ſtreets in Falmouth; and, indeed, any object I ſaw filled me with new ſurpriſe. One morning, when I got upon deck, I ſaw it covered all over with the ſnow that fell over-night: as I had never ſeen any thing of the kind before, I thought it was ſalt; ſo I immediately ran down to the mate and deſired him, as well as I could, to come and ſee how ſomebody in the night had thrown ſalt all over the deck. He, knowing what it was, deſired me to bring ſome of it down to him: accordingly I took up a handful of it, which I found very cold indeed; and when I brought it to him he deſired me to taſte it. I did ſo, and I was ſurpriſed beyond meaſure. I then aſked him what it was; he told me it was ſnow: but I could not in anywiſe underſtand him. He

asked me if we had no ſuch thing in my country; and I told him, No. I then aſked him the uſe of it, and who made it; he told me a great man in the heavens, called God: but here again I was to all intents and purpoſes at a loſs to underſtand him; and the more ſo, when a little after I ſaw the air filled with it, in a heavy ſhower, which fell down on the ſame day. After this I went to church; and having never been at ſuch a place before, I was again amazed at ſeeing and hearing the ſervice. I aſked all I could about it; and they gave me to underſtand it was worſhipping God, who made us and all things. I was ſtill at a great loſs, and ſoon got into an endleſs field of inquiries, as well as I was able to ſpeak and aſk about things. However, my little friend Dick uſed to

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be my beſt interpreter; for I could make free with him, and he always inſtructed me with pleaſure: and from what I could underſtand by him of this God, and in ſeeing theſe white people did not ſell one another, as we did, I was much pleaſed; and in this I thought they were much happier than we Africans. I was aſtoniſhed at the wiſdom of the white people in all things I ſaw; but was amazed at their not ſacrificing, or making any offerings, and eating with unwaſhed hands, and touching the dead. I likewiſe could not help remarking the particular ſlenderneſs of their women, which I did not at firſt like; and I thought they were not ſo modeſt and ſhamefaced as the African women.

I had often ſeen my maſter and Dick employed in reading; and I had a great curioſity to talk to the books, as

I thought they did; and so to learn how all things had a beginning: for that purpose I have often taken up a book, and have talked to it, and then put my ears to it, when alone, in hopes it would answer me; and I have been very much concerned when I found it remained silent.

My master lodged at the house of a gentleman in Falmouth, who had a fine little daughter about six or seven years of age, and she grew prodigiously fond of me; insomuch that we used to eat together, and had servants to wait on us. I was so much caressed by this family that it often reminded me of the treatment I had received from my little noble African master. After I had been here a few days, I was sent on board of the ship; but the child cried so much after me that nothing could pacify her till I was sent for again.

It is ludicrous enough, that I began to fear I should be betrothed to this young lady; and when my master asked me if I would stay there with her behind him, as he was going away with the ship, which had taken in the tobacco again, I cried immediately, and said I would not leave her. At last, by stealth, one night I was sent on board the ship again; and in a little time we sailed for Guernsey, where she was in part owned by a merchant, one Nicholas Doberry. As I was now amongst a people who had not their faces scarred, like some of the African nations where I had been, I was very glad I did not let them ornament me in that manner when I was with them. When we arrived at Guernsey, my master placed me to board and lodge with one of his mates, who had a wife and family there; and some months afterwards

wards he went to England, and left me in care of this mate, together with my friend Dick: This mate had a little daughter, aged about five or ſix years, with whom I uſed to be much delighted. I had often obſerved that when her mother waſhed her face it looked very roſy; but when ſhe waſhed mine it did not look ſo: I therefore tried oftentimes myſelf if I could not by waſhing make my face of the ſame colour as my little play-mate (Mary), but it was all in vain; and I now began to be mortified at the difference in our complexions. This woman behaved to me with great kindneſs and attention; and taught me every thing in the ſame manner as ſhe did her own child, and indeed in every reſpect treated me as ſuch. I remained here till the ſummer of the year 1757; when my maſter, being appointed firſt lieu-

tenant of his majesty's ſhip the Roebuck, ſent for Dick and me, and his old mate: on this we all left Guernſey, and ſet out for England in a ſloop bound for London. As we were coming up towards the Nore, where the Roebuck lay, a man of war's boat came alongſide to preſs our people; on which each man ran to hide himſelf. I was very much frightened at this, though I did not know what it meant, or what to think or do. However I went and hid myſelf alſo under a hencoop. Immediately afterwards the preſs-gang came on board with their ſwords drawn, and ſearched all about, pulled the people out by force, and put them into the boat. At laſt I was found out alſo: the man that found me held me up by the heels while they all made their ſport of me, I roaring and crying out all the time moſt luſtily: but at

laſt the mate, who was my conductor, ſeeing this, came to my aſſiſtance, and did all he could to pacify me; but all to very little purpoſe, till I had ſeen the boat go off. Soon afterwards we came to the Nore, where the Roebuck lay; and, to our great joy, my maſter came on board to us, and brought us to the ſhip. When I went on board this large ſhip, I was amazed indeed to ſee the quantity of men and the guns. However my ſurpriſe began to diminiſh as my knowledge increaſed; and I ceaſed to feel thoſe apprehenſions and alarms which had taken ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of me when I firſt came among the Europeans, and for ſome time after. I began now to paſs to an oppoſite extreme; I was ſo far from being afraid of any thing new which I ſaw, that, after I had been ſome time in this ſhip, I even began to long for a battle.

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My griefs too, which in young minds are not perpetual, were now wearing away; and I soon enjoyed myſelf pretty well, and felt tolerably eaſy in my preſent ſituation. There was a number of boys on board, which ſtill made it more agreeable; for we were always together, and a great part of our time was ſpent in play. I remained in this ſhip a conſiderable time, during which we made ſeveral cruiſes, and viſited a variety of places: among others we were twice in Holland, and brought over ſeveral perſons of diſtinction from it, whoſe names I do not now remember. On the paſſage, one day, for the diverſion of thoſe gentlemen, all the boys were called on the quarter-deck, and were paired proportionably, and then made to fight; after which the gentleman gave the combatants from five to nine ſhillings each. This was the

the firſt time I ever fought with a white boy; and I never knew what it was to have a bloody noſe before. This made me fight moſt deſperately; I ſuppoſe conſiderably more than an hour: and at laſt, both of us being weary, we were parted. I had a great deal of this kind of ſport afterwards, in which the captain and the ſhip's company uſed very much to encourage me. Some-time afterwards the ſhip went to Leith in Scotland, and from thence to the Orkneys, where I was ſurpriſed in ſeeing ſcarcely any night: and from thence we ſailed with a great fleet, full of ſoldiers, for England. All this time we had never come to an engagement, though we were frequently cruiſing off the coaſt of France: during which we chaſed many veſſels, and took in all ſeventeen prizes. I had been learning many of the manœuvres of the ſhip during

during our cruife; and I was feveral times made to fire the guns. One evening, off Havre de Grace, juft as it was growing dark, we were ftanding off fhore, and met with a fine large French-built frigate. We got all things immediately ready for fighting; and I now expected I fhould be gratified in feeing an engagement, which I had fo long wifhed for in vain. But the very moment the word of command was given to fire we heard thofe on board the other fhip cry 'Haul down the jib;' and in that inftant fhe hoifted Englifh colours. There was inftantly with us an amazing cry of—Avaft! or ftop firing; and I think one or two guns had been let off, but happily they did no mifchief. We had hailed them feveral times; but they not hearing, we received no anfwer, which was the caufe of our firing. The boat was then fent

on

on board of her, and ſhe proved to be the Ambuſcade man of war, to my no ſmall diſappointment. We returned to Portſmouth, without having been in any action, juſt at the trial of Admiral Byng (whom I ſaw ſeveral times during it): and my maſter having left the ſhip, and gone to London for promotion, Dick and I were put on board the Savage ſloop of war, and we went in her to aſſiſt in bringing off the St. George man of war, that had ran aſhore ſomewhere on the coaſt. After ſtaying a few weeks on board the Savage, Dick and I were ſent on ſhore at Deal, where we remained ſome ſhort time, till my maſter ſent for us to London, the place I had long deſired exceedingly to ſee. We therefore both with great pleaſure got into a waggon, and came to London, where we were received by a Mr. Guerin, a relation of my maſter. This

gentleman

gentleman had two ſiſters, very amiable ladies, who took much notice and great care of me. Though I had deſired ſo much to ſee London, when I arrived in it I was unfortunately unable to gratify my curioſity; for I had at this time the chilblains to ſuch a degree that I could not ſtand for ſeveral months, and I was obliged to be ſent to St. George's Hoſpital. There I grew ſo ill, that the doctors wanted to cut my left leg off at different times, apprehending a mortification; but I always ſaid I would rather die than ſuffer it; and happily (I thank God) I recovered without the operation. After being there ſeveral weeks, and juſt as I had recovered, the ſmall-pox broke out on me, ſo that I was again confined; and I thought myſelf now particularly unfortunate. However I ſoon recovered again; and by this time my

mafter having been promoted to be firft lieutenant of the Prefton man of war of fifty guns, then new at Deptford, Dick and I were fent on board her, and foon after we went to Holland to bring over the late Duke of ——— to England.—While I was in this fhip an incident happened, which, though trifling, I beg leave to relate, as I could not help taking particular notice of it, and confidering it then as a judgment of God. One morning a young man was looking up to the fore-top, and in a wicked tone, common on fhipboard, d—d his eyes about fomething. Juft at the moment fome fmall particles of dirt fell into his left eye, and by the evening it was very much inflamed. The next day it grew worfe; and within fix or feven days he loft it. From this fhip my mafter was appointed a lieutenant on board the Royal George.

When he was going he wiſhed me to ſtay on board the Preſton, to learn the French horn; but the ſhip being ordered for Turkey I could not think of leaving my maſter, to whom I was very warmly attached; and I told him if he left me behind it would break my heart. This prevailed on him to take me with him; but he left Dick on board the Preſton, whom I embraced at parting for the laſt time. The Royal George was the largeſt ſhip I had ever ſeen; ſo that when I came on board of her I was ſurpriſed at the number of people, men, women, and children, of every denomination; and the largeneſs of the guns, many of them alſo of braſs, which I had never ſeen before. Here were alſo ſhops or ſtalls of every kind of goods, and people crying their different commodities about the ſhip as in a town. To me it appeared a little world,

world, into which I was again caſt without a friend, for I had no longer my dear companion Dick. We did not ſtay long here. My maſter was not many weeks on board before he got an appointment to be ſixth lieutenant of the Namur, which was then at Spithead, fitting up for Vice-admiral Boſcawen, who was going with a large fleet on an expedition againſt Louiſburgh. The crew of the Royal George were turned over to her, and the flag of that gallant admiral was hoiſted on board, the blue at the maintop-gallant maſt head. There was a very great fleet of men of war of every deſcription aſſembled together for this expedition, and I was in hopes ſoon to have an opportunity of being gratified with a ſea-fight. All things being now in readineſs, this mighty fleet (for there was alſo Admiral Corniſh's fleet in company,

pany, deſtined for the Eaſt Indies) at laſt weighed anchor, and failed. The two fleets continued in company for ſeveral days, and then parted; Admiral Corniſh, in the Lenox, having firſt ſaluted our admiral in the Namur, which he returned. We then ſteered for America; but, by contrary winds, we were driven to Teneriffe, where I was ſtruck with its noted peak. Its prodigious height, and its form, reſembling a ſugar-loaf, filled me with wonder. We remained in ſight of this iſland ſome days, and then proceeded for America, which we ſoon made, and got into a very commodious harbour called St. George, in Halifax, where we had fiſh in great plenty, and all other freſh proviſions. We were here joined by different men of war and tranſport ſhips with ſoldiers; after which, our fleet being increaſed to a prodigious

prodigious number of ſhips of all kinds, we ſailed for Cape Breton in Nova Scotia. We had the good and gallant General Wolfe on board our ſhip, whoſe affability made him highly eſteemed and beloved by all the men. He often honoured me, as well as other boys, with marks of his notice; and ſaved me once a flogging for fighting with a young gentleman. We arrived at Cape Breton in the ſummer of 1758: and here the ſoldiers were to be landed, in order to make an attack upon Louiſbourgh. My maſter had ſome part in ſuperintending the landing; and here I was in a ſmall meaſure gratified in ſeeing an encounter between our men and the enemy. The French were poſted on the ſhore to receive us, and diſputed our landing for a long time: but at laſt they were driven from their trenches, and a complete landing was effected. Our

troops purſued them as far as the town of Louiſbourgh. In this action many were killed on both ſides. One thing remarkable I ſaw this day:—A lieutenant of the Princeſs Amelia, who, as well as my maſter, ſuperintended the landing, was giving the word of command, and while his mouth was open a muſquet ball went through it, and paſſed out at his cheek. I had that day in my hand the ſcalp of an indian king, who was killed in the engagement: the ſcalp had been taken off by an Highlander. I ſaw this king's ornaments too, which were very curious, and made of feathers.

Our land forces laid ſiege to the town of Louiſbourgh, while the French men of war were blocked up in the harbour by the fleet, the batteries at the ſame time playing upon them from the land. This they did with ſuch effect, that one

day I ſaw ſome of the ſhips ſet on fire by the ſhells from the batteries, and I believe two or three of them were quite burnt. At another time, about fifty boats belonging to the Engliſh men of war, commanded by Captain George Belfour of the Ætna fire-ſhip, and Mr. Laforey another junior captain, attacked and boarded the only two remaining French men of war in the harbour. They alſo ſet fire to a ſeventy-gun ſhip, but a ſixty-four, called the Bienfaiſant, they brought off. During my ſtay here I had often an opportunity of being near captain Belfour, who was pleaſed to notice me, and liked me ſo much that he often aſked my maſter to let him have me, but he would not part with me; and no conſideration could have induced me to leave him. At laſt Louiſbourgh was taken, and the Engliſh men of war came into the harbour

before

before it, to my very great joy; for I had now more liberty of indulging myſelf, and I went often on ſhore. When the ſhips were in the harbour we had the moſt beautiful proceſſion on the water I ever ſaw. All the admirals and captains of the men of war, full dreſſed, and in their barges, well ornamented with pendants, came alongſide of the Namur. The vice-admiral then went on ſhore in his barge, followed by the other officers in order of ſeniority, to take poſſeſſion, as I ſuppoſe, of the town and fort. Some time after this the French governor and his lady, and other perſons of note, came on board our ſhip to dine. On this occaſion our ſhips were dreſſed with colours of all kinds, from the topgallant-maſt head to the deck; and this, with the firing of guns, formed a moſt grand and magnificent ſpectacle.

As

As ſoon as every thing here was ſettled, Admiral Boſcawen ſailed with part of the fleet for England, leaving ſome ſhips behind with Rear admirals Sir Charles Hardy and Durell. It was now winter; and one evening, during our paſſage home, about duſk, when we were in the channel, or near ſoundings, and were beginning to look for land, we deſcried ſeven ſail of large men of war, which ſtood off ſhore. Several people on board of our ſhip ſaid, as the two fleets were (in forty minutes from the firſt ſight) within hail of each other, that they were Engliſh men of war; and ſome of our people even began to name ſome of the ſhips. By this time both fleets began to mingle, and our admiral ordered his flag to be hoiſted. At that inſtant the other fleet, which were French, hoiſted their enſigns, and gave us a broadſide as they

 paſſed

paſſed by. Nothing could create greater ſurpriſe and confuſion among us than this: the wind was high, the ſea rough, and we had our lower and middle deck guns houſed in, ſo that not a ſingle gun on board was ready to be fired at any of the French ſhips. However, the Royal William and the Somerſet, being our ſternmoſt ſhips, became a little prepared, and each gave the French ſhips a broadſide as they paſſed by. I afterwards heard this was a French ſquadron, commanded by Monſ. Conflans; and certainly had the Frenchmen known our condition, and had a mind to fight us, they might have done us great miſchief. But we were not long before we were prepared for an engagement. Immediately many things were toſſed overboard; the ſhips were made ready for fighting as ſoon as poſſible; and about ten at night we had bent a new main-

main ſail, the old one being ſplit. Being now in readineſs for fighting, we wore ſhip, and ſtood after the French fleet, who were one or two ſhips in number more than we. However we gave them chaſe, and continued purſuing them all night; and at day-light we ſaw ſix of them, all large ſhips of the line, and an Engliſh Eaſt Indiaman, a prize they had taken. We chaſed them all day till between three and four o'clock in the evening, when we came up with, and paſſed within a muſquet ſhot of one ſeventy-four gun ſhip, and the Indiaman alſo, who now hoiſted her colours, but immediately hauled them down again. On this we made a ſignal for the other ſhips to take poſſeſſion of her; and, ſuppoſing the man of war would likewiſe ſtrike, we cheered, but ſhe did not; though if we had fired into her, from being ſo near, we muſt have taken her. To my utter ſurpriſe,

the Somerfet, who was the next fhip a-ftern of the Namur, made way likewife; and, thinking they were fure of this French fhip, they cheered in the fame manner, but ftill continued to follow us. The French Commodore was about a gun-fhot ahead of all, running from us with all fpeed, and about four o'clock he carried his foretopmaft overboard. This caufed another loud cheer with us; and a little after the topmaft came clofe by us; but, to our great furprife, inftead of coming up with her, we found fhe went as faft as ever, if not fafter. The fea grew now much fmoother; and the wind lulling, the feventy-four gun fhip we had paffed came again by us in the very fame direction; and fo near, that we heard her people talk as fhe went by; yet not a fhot was fired on either fide; and about five or fix o'clock, juft as it grew dark, fhe joined her

commodore.

commodore. We chafed all night; but the next day we were out of fight, fo that we faw no more of them; and we only had the old Indiaman (called Carnarvon I think) for our trouble. After this we ftood in for the channel, and foon made the land; and, about the clofe of the year 1758—9, we got fafe to St. Helen's. Here the Namur ran aground; and alfo another large fhip aftern of us; but, by ftarting our water, and toffing many things overboard to lighten her, we got the fhips off without any damage. We ftayed for a fhort time at Spithead, and then went into Portfmouth harbour to refit: from whence the admiral went to London; and my mafter and I foon followed, with a prefs-gang, as we wanted fome hands to complete our complement.

CHAP. IV.

The author is baptized—Narrowly escapes drowning—Goes on an expedition to the Mediterranean—Incidents he met with there—Is witness to an engagement between some English and French ships—A particular account of the celebrated engagement between Admiral Boscawen and Monf. Le Clue, off Cape Logos, in August 1759—*Dreadful explosion of a French ship—The author sails for England—His master appointed to the command of a fire-ship—Meets a negro boy, from whom he experiences much benevolence—Prepares for an expedition against Belle-Isle—A remarkable story of a disaster which befel his ship—Arrives at Belle-Isle—Operations of the landing and*

and siege—The author's danger and distress, with his manner of extricating himself—Surrender of Belle-Isle—Transactions afterwards on the coast of France—Remarkable instance of kidnapping—The author returns to England—Hears a talk of peace, and expects his freedom—His ship sails for Deptford to be paid off, and when he arrives there he is suddenly seized by his master and carried forcibly on board a West India ship and sold.

IT was now between two and three years since I first came to England, a great part of which I had spent at sea; so that I became inured to that service, and began to consider myself as happily situated; for my master treated me always extremely well; and my attachment and gratitude to him were very great. From the various scenes I had

beheld on ſhip-board, I ſoon grew a ſtranger to terror of every kind, and was, in that reſpect at leaſt, almoſt an Engliſhman. I have often reflected with ſurpriſe that I never felt half the alarm at any of the numerous dangers I have been in, that I was filled with at the firſt ſight of the Europeans, and at every act of theirs, even the moſt trifling, when I firſt came among them, and for ſome time afterwards. That fear, however, which was the effect of my ignorance, wore away as I began to know them. I could now ſpeak Engliſh tolerably well, and I perfectly underſtood every thing that was ſaid. I not only felt myſelf quite eaſy with theſe new countrymen, but relished their ſociety and manners. I no longer looked upon them as ſpirits, but as men ſuperior to us; and therefore I had the ſtronger deſire to reſemble

femble them; to imbibe their fpirit, and imitate their manners; I therefore embraced every occafion of improvement; and every new thing that I obferved I treafured up in my memory. I had long wifhed to be able to read and write; and for this purpofe I took every opportunity to gain inftruction, but had made as yet very little progrefs. However, when I went to London with my mafter, I had foon an opportunity of improving myfelf, which I gladly embraced. Shortly after my arrival, he fent me to wait upon the Mifs Guerins, who had treated me with much kindnefs when I was there before; and they fent me to fchool.

While I was attending thefe ladies, their fervants told me I could not go to Heaven, unlefs I was baptized. This made me very uneafy; for I had now fome faint idea of a future ftate: accordingly

accordingly I communicated my anxiety to the eldeſt Miſs Guerin, with whom I was become a favourite, and preſſed her to have me baptized; when to my great joy, ſhe told me I ſhould. She had formerly aſked my maſter to let me be baptized, but he had refuſed; however ſhe now inſiſted on it; and he being under ſome obligation to her brother complied with her requeſt; ſo I was baptized in St. Margaret's church, Weſtminſter, in February 1759, by my preſent name. The clergyman at the ſame time, gave me a book, called a Guide to the Indians, written by the Biſhop of Sodor and Man. On this occaſion, Miſs Guerin did me the honour to ſtand as godmother, and afterwards gave me a treat. I uſed to attend theſe ladies about the town, in which ſervice I was extremely happy; as I had thus many opportunities of ſeeing

ſeeing London, which I deſired of all things. I was ſometimes, however, with my maſter at his rendezvous-houſe, which was at the foot of Weſtminſter-bridge. Here I uſed to enjoy myſelf in playing about the bridge ſtairs, and often in the watermen's wherries, with other boys. On one of theſe occaſions there was another boy with me in a wherry, and we went out into the current of the river: while we were there, two more ſtout boys came to us in another wherry, and, abuſing us for taking the boat, deſired me to get into the other wherry-boat. Accordingly I went to get out of the wherry I was in; but juſt as I had got one of my feet into the other boat, the boys ſhoved it off, ſo that I fell into the Thames; and, not being able to ſwim, I ſhould unavoidably have been drowned, but for the aſſiſtance of ſome

watermen

watermen who providentially came to my relief.

The Namur being again got ready for ſea, my maſter, with his gang, was ordered on board; and, to my no ſmall grief, I was obliged to leave my ſchool-maſter, whom I liked very much, and always attended while I ſtayed in London, to repair on board with my maſter. Nor did I leave my kind patroneſſes, the Miſs Guerins, without uneaſineſs and regret. They often uſed to teach me to read, and took great pains to inſtruct me in the principles of religion and the knowledge of God. I therefore parted from thoſe amiable ladies with reluctance: after receiving from them many friendly cautions how to conduct myſelf, and ſome valuable preſents.

When I came to Spithead, I found we were deſtined for the Mediterra-

nean,

nean, with a large fleet, which was now ready to put to fea. We only waited for the arrival of the admiral, who foon came on board; and about the beginning of the fpring 1759, having weighed anchor, and got under way, failed for the Mediterranean; and in eleven days, from the Land's End, we got to Gibraltar. While we were here, I ufed to be often on fhore, and got various fruits in great plenty, and very cheap.

I had frequently told feveral people, in my excurfions on fhore, the ftory of my being kidnapped with my fifter, and of our being feparated, as I have related before; and I had as often expreffed my anxiety for her fate, and my forrow at having never met her again. One day, when I was on fhore, and mentioning thefe circumftances to fome perfons, one of them told me he knew where

where my ſiſter was, and, if I would accompany him, he would bring me to her. Improbable as this ſtory was, I believed it immediately, and agreed to go with him, while my heart leaped for joy; and, indeed, he conducted me to a black young woman, who was ſo like my ſiſter, that at firſt ſight, I really thought it was her: but I was quickly undeceived; and, on talking to her, I found her to be of another nation.

While we lay here the Preſton came in from the Levant. As ſoon as ſhe arrived, my maſter told me I ſhould now ſee my old companion, Dick, who was gone in her when ſhe failed for Turkey. I was much rejoiced at this news, and expected every minute to embrace him; and when the captain came on board of our ſhip, which he did immediately after, I ran to inquire after my friend; but, with inexpreſſible

preſſible ſorrow, I learned from the boat's crew that the dear youth was dead! and that they had brought his cheſt, and all his other things, to my maſter: theſe he afterwards gave to me, and I regarded them as a memorial of my friend, whom I loved, and grieved for, as a brother.

While we were at Gibralter, I ſaw a ſoldier hanging by the heels, at one of the moles*: I thought this a ſtrange ſight, as I had ſeen a man hanged in London by his neck. At another time I ſaw the maſter of a frigate towed to ſhore on a grating, by ſeveral of the men of war's boats, and diſcharged the fleet, which I underſtood was a mark of diſgrace for cowardice. On board the ſame ſhip there was alſo a ſailor hung up at the yard-arm.

After lying at Gibralter for ſome

*He had drowned himſelf in endeavouring to deſert.

time,

time, we failed up the Mediterranean a confiderable way above the Gulf of Lyons; where we were one night overtaken with a terrible gale of wind, much greater than any I had ever yet experienced. The fea ran fo high that, though all the guns were well houfed, there was great reafon to fear their getting loofe, the fhip rolled fo much; and if they had it muft have proved our deftruction. After we had cruifed here for a fhort time, we came to Barcelona, a Spanifh fea-port, remarkable for its filk manufactures. Here the fhips were all to be watered; and my mafter, who fpoke different languages, and ufed often to interpret for the admiral, fuperintended the watering of ours. For that purpofe he and the officers of the other fhips, who were on the fame fervice, had tents pitched in the bay; and the Spanifh foldiers were ftationed along the fhore, I fuppofe

pose to see that no depredations were committed by our men.

I used constantly to attend my master; and I was charmed with this place. All the time we stayed it was like a fair with the natives, who brought us fruits of all kinds, and sold them to us much cheaper than I got them in England. They used also to bring wine down to us in hog and sheep skins, which diverted me very much. The Spanish officers here treated our officers with great politeness and attention; and some of them, in particular, used to come often to my master's tent to visit him; where they would sometimes divert themselves by mounting me on the horses or mules, so that I could not fall, and setting them off at full gallop; my imperfect skill in horsemanship all the while affording them no small entertainment. After the ships were

watered,

watered, we returned to our old ſtation of cruizing off Toulon, for the purpoſe of intercepting a fleet of French men of war that lay there. One Sunday, in our cruiſe, we came off a place where there were two ſmall French frigates lying in ſhore; and our admiral, thinking to take or deſtroy them, ſent two ſhips in after them—the Culloden and the Conqueror. They ſoon came up to the Frenchmen; and I ſaw a ſmart fight here, both by ſea and land: for the frigates were covered by batteries, and they played upon our ſhips moſt furiouſly, which they as furiouſly returned, and for a long time a conſtant firing was kept up on all ſides at an amazing rate. At laſt one frigate ſunk; but the people eſcaped, though not without much difficulty: and a little after ſome of the people left the other frigate alſo, which was a mere

wreck.

wreck. However, our ſhips did not venture to bring her away, they were ſo much annoyed from the batteries, which raked them both in going and coming: their topmaſts were ſhot away, and they were otherwiſe ſo much ſhattered, that the admiral was obliged to ſend in many boats to tow them back to the fleet. I afterwards ſailed with a man who fought in one of the French batteries during the engagement, and he told me our ſhips had done conſiderable miſchief that day on ſhore and in the batteries.

After this we ſailed for Gibraltar, and arrived there about Auguſt 1759. Here we remained with all our ſails unbent, while the fleet was watering and doing other neceſſary things. While we were in this ſituation, one day the admiral, with moſt of the principal officers, and many people of all ſtations, being

being on ſhore, about ſeven o'clock in the evening, we were alarmed by ſignals from the frigates ſtationed for that purpoſe; and in an inſtant there was a general cry that the French fleet was out, and juſt paſſing through the ſtreights. The admiral immediately came on board with ſome other officers; and it is impoſſible to deſcribe the noiſe, hurry and confuſion throughout the whole fleet, in bending their ſails and ſlipping their cables; many people and ſhips' boats were left on ſhore in the buſtle. We had two captains on board of our ſhip who came away in the hurry and left their ſhips to follow. We ſhewed lights from the gun-wales to the main top maſt-head; and all our lieutenants were employed amongſt the fleet to tell the ſhips not to wait for ther captains, but to put the ſails to the yards, ſlip their cables and

and follow us; and in this confusion of making ready for fighting, we set out for sea in the dark after the French fleet. Here I could have exclaimed with Ajax,

> "Oh Jove! O father! if it be thy will
> "That we must perish, we thy will obey,
> "But let us perish by the light of day."

They had got the start of us so far that we were not able to come up with them during the night; but at day-light we saw seven sail of the line of battle some miles ahead. We immediately chased them till about four o'clock in the evening, when our ships came up with them; and, though we were about fifteen large ships, our gallant admiral only fought them with his own division, which consisted of seven; so that we were just ship for ship. We passed by the whole of the enemy's fleet in order to come at their com-

 mander,

mander, Monſ. La Clue, who was in the Ocean, an eighty-four gun ſhip: as we paſſed they all fired on us; and at one time three of them fired together, continuing to do ſo for ſome time. Notwithſtanding which our admiral would not ſuffer a gun to be fired at any of them, to my aſtoniſhment; but made us lie on our bellies on the deck till we came quite cloſe to the Ocean, who was ahead of them all; when we had orders to pour the whole three tiers into her at once.

The engagement now commenced with great fury on both ſides: the Ocean immediately returned our fire, and we continued engaged with each other for ſome time; during which I was frequently ſtunned with the thundering of the great guns, whoſe dreadful contents hurried many of my companions into awful eternity. At laſt the French

line

line was entirely broken, and we obtained the victory, which was immediately proclaimed with loud huzzas and acclamations. We took three prizes, La Modeste, of sixty-four guns, and Le Temeraire and Centaur, of seventy-four guns each. The rest of the French ships took to flight with all the sail they could crowd. Our ship being very much damaged, and quite disabled from pursuing the enemy, the admiral immediately quitted her, and went in the broken and only boat we had left on board the Newark, with which, and some other ships, he went after the French. The Ocean, and another large French ship, called the Redoubtable, endeavouring to escape, ran ashore at Cape Logas, on the coast of Portugal; and the French admiral and some of the crew got ashore; but we, finding it impossible to get the ships

 off,

on, ſet fire to them both. About midnight I ſaw the Ocean blow up, with a moſt dreadful exploſion. I never beheld a more awful ſcene. In leſs than a minute, the midnight for a certain ſpace ſeemed turned into day by the blaze, which was attended with a noiſe louder and more terrible than thunder, that ſeemed to rend every element around us.

My ſtation during the engagement was on the middle-deck, where I was quartered with another boy, to bring powder to the aftermoſt gun; and here I was a witneſs of the dreadful fate of many of my companions, who, in the twinkling of an eye, were daſhed in pieces, and launched into eternity. Happily I eſcaped unhurt, though the ſhot and ſplinters flew thick about me during the whole fight. Towards the latter part of it my maſter was wound-

 ed,

much shattered, that our mizen-mast, main-yard, &c. hung over the side of the ship; so that we were obliged to get many carpenters, and others from some of the ships of the fleet, to assist in setting us in some tolerable order; and, notwithstanding which, it took us some time before we were completely refitted; after which we left Admiral Broderick to command, and we, with the prizes steered for England. On the passage, and as soon as my master was something recovered of his wounds, the admiral appointed him captain of the Ætna fire-ship, on which he and I left the Namur, and went on board of her at sea. I liked this little ship very much. I now became the captain's steward, in which situation I was very happy: for I was extremely well treated by all on board; and I had leisure to improve myself in

reading and writing. The latter I had learned a little of before I left the Namur, as there was a ſchool on board. When we arrived at Spithead, the Ætna went into Portſmouth harbour to refit, which being done, we returned to Spithead and joined a large fleet that was thought to be intended againſt the Havannah; but about that time the king died; whether that prevented the expedition I know not; but it cauſed our ſhip to be ſtationed at Cowes, in the iſle of Wight, till the beginning of the year ſixty-one. Here I ſpent my time very pleaſantly; I was much on ſhore all about this delightful iſland, and found the inhabitants very civil.

While I was here, I met with a trifling incident, which ſurpriſed me agreeably. I was one day in a field belonging to a gentleman who had a black boy about my own ſize; this boy having

having obſerved me from his maſter's houſe, was tranſported at the ſight of one of his own countrymen, and ran to meet me with the utmoſt haſte. I not knowing what he was about, turned a little out of his way at firſt, but to no purpoſe: he ſoon came cloſe to me and caught hold of me in his arms as if I had been his brother, though we had never ſeen each other before. After we had talked together for ſome time he took me to his maſter's houſe, where I was treated very kindly. This benevolent boy and I were very happy in frequently ſeeing each other till about the month of March 1761, when our ſhip had orders to fit out again for another expedition. When we got ready, we joined a very large fleet at Spithead, commanded by Commodore Keppel, which was deſtined againſt Belle-Iſle, and with a number of tranſ-

port ſhips with troops on board to make a deſcent on the place, we ſailed once more in queſt of fame. I longed to engage in new adventures and ſee freſh wonders.

I had a mind on which every thing uncommon made its full impreſſion, and every event which I conſidered as marvellous. Every extraordinary eſcape, or ſignal deliverance, either of myſelf or others, I looked upon to be effected by the interpoſition of Providence. We had not been above ten days at ſea before an incident of this kind happened; which, whatever credit it may obtain from the reader, made no ſmall impreſſion on my mind.

We had on board a gunner, whoſe name was John Mondle; a man of very indifferent morals. This man's cabin was between the decks, exactly over where I lay, abreaſt of the quarter-deck ladder.

ladder. One night, the 5th of April, being terrified with a dream, he awoke in so great a fright that he could not rest in his bed any longer, nor even remain in his cabin; and he went upon deck about four o'clock in the morning extremely agitated. He immediately told those on the deck of the agonies of his mind, and the dream which occasioned it; in which he said he had seen many things very awful, and had been warned by St. Peter to repent, who told him time was short. This he said had greatly alarmed him, and he was determined to alter his life. People generally mock the fears of others when they are themselves in safety; and some of his shipmates who heard him only laughed at him. However, he made a vow that he never would drink strong liquors again; and he immediately got a light, and gave away his sea-stores

 of

of liquor. After which, his agitation ſtill continuing, he began to read the Scriptures, hoping to find ſome relief; and ſoon afterwards he laid himſelf down again on his bed, and endeavoured to compoſe himſelf to ſleep, but to no purpoſe; his mind ſtill continuing in a ſtate of agony. By this time it was exactly half after ſeven in the morning: I was then under the half-deck at the great cabin door; and all at once I heard the people in the waiſt cry out, moſt fearfully—'The Lord have mercy 'upon us! We are all loſt! The 'Lord have mercy upon us!' Mr. Mondle hearing the cries, immediately ran out of his cabin; and we were inſtantly ſtruck by the Lynne, a forty-gun ſhip, Captain Clark, which nearly ran us down. This ſhip had juſt put about, and was by the wind, but had not got full headway, or we muſt all have

have perished; for the wind was brisk. However, before Mr Mondle had got four steps from his cabin door, she struck our ship with her cutwater right in the middle of his bed and cabin, and ran it up to the combings of the quarter deck hatchway, and above three feet below water, and in a minute there was not a bit of wood to be seen where Mr. Mondle's cabin stood; and he was so near being killed that some of the splinters tore his face. As Mr. Mondle must inevitably have perished from this accident had he not been alarmed in the very extraordinary way I have related, I could not help regarding this as an awful interposition of Providence for his preservation. The two ships for some time swinged alongside of each other; for ours being a fireship, our grappling-irons caught the Lynne every way, and the yards and rigging

went

went at an aſtoniſhing rate. Our ſhip was in ſuch a ſhocking condition that we all thought ſhe would inſtantly go down, and every one ran for their lives, and got as well as they could on board the Lynne; but our lieutenant being the aggreſſor, he never quitted the ſhip. However, when we found ſhe did not ſink immediately, the captain came on board again, and encouraged our people to return and try to ſave her. Many on this came back, but ſome would not venture. Some of the ſhips in the fleet, ſeeing our ſituation, immediately ſent their boats to our aſſiſtance; but it took us the whole day to ſave the ſhip with all their help. And by uſing every poſſible means, particularly frapping her together with many hawſers, and putting a great quantity of tallow below water where ſhe was damaged, ſhe was kept to-

gether: but it was well we did not meet with any gales of wind, or we muſt have gone to pieces; for we were in ſuch a crazy condition that we had ſhips to attend us till we arrived at Belle-Iſle, the place of our deſtination; and then we had all things taken out of the ſhip, and ſhe was properly repaired. This eſcape of Mr. Mondle, which he, as well as myſelf, always conſidered as a ſingular act of Providence, I believe had a great influence on his life and conduct ever afterwards.

Now that I am on this ſubject I beg leave to relate another inſtance or two which ſtrongly raiſed my belief of the particular interpoſition of Heaven, and which might not otherways have found a place here, from their inſignificance. I belonged for a few days in the year 1758, to the Jaſon, of fifty-four guns, at Plymouth; and one night, when I

was

was on board, a woman, with a child at her breaſt, fell from the upper-deck down into the hold, near the keel. Every one thought that the mother and child muſt be both daſhed to pieces; but, to our great ſurpriſe, neither of them was hurt. I myſelf one day fell headlong from the upper-deck of the Ætna down the after-hold, when the ballaſt was out; and all who ſaw me fall cried out I was killed: but I received not the leaſt injury. And in the ſame ſhip a man fell from the maſt-head on the deck without being hurt. In theſe, and in many more inſtances, I thought I could plainly trace the hand of God, without whoſe permiſſion a ſparrow cannot fall. I began to raiſe my fear from man to him alone, and to call daily on his holy name with fear and reverence: and I truſt he heard my ſupplications, and graciouſly condeſcended

condefcended to anfwer me according to his holy word, and to implant the feeds of piety in me, even one of the meaneft of his creatures.

When we had refitted our fhip, and all things were in readinefs for attacking the place, the troops on board the tranfports were ordered to difembark; and my mafter as a junior captain, had a fhare in the command of the landing. This was on the 12th of April. The French were drawn up on the fhore, and had made every difpofition to oppofe the landing of our men, only a fmall part of them this day being able to effect it; moft of them, after fighting with great bravery, were cut off; and General Crawford, with a number of others, were taken prifoners. In this day's engagement we had alfo our lieutenant killed.

On the 21ft of April we renewed our

efforts to land the men, while all the men of war were ftationed along the fhore to cover it, and fired at the French batteries and breaftworks from early in the morning till about four o'clock in the evening, when our foldiers effected a fafe landing. They immediately attacked the French; and, after a fharp encounter, forced them from the batteries. Before the enemy retreated they blew up feveral of them, left they fhould fall into our hands. Our men now proceeded to befiege the citadel, and my mafter was ordered on fhore to fuperintend the landing of all the materials neceffary for carrying on the fiege, in which fervice I moftly attended him. While I was there I went about to different parts of the ifland; and one day, particularly, my curiofity almoft coft me my life. I wanted very much to fee the mode of charging the

mortars

mortars and letting off the ſhells, and for that purpoſe I went to an Engliſh battery that was but a very few yards from the walls of the citadel. There, indeed, I had an opportunity of completely gratifying myſelf in ſeeing the whole operation, and that not without running a very great riſk, both from the Engliſh ſhells that burſt while I was there, but likewiſe from thoſe of the French. One of the largeſt of their ſhells burſted within nine or ten yards of me: there was a ſingle rock cloſe by, about the ſize of a butt; and I got inſtant ſhelter under it in time to avoid the fury of the ſhell. Where it burſt the earth was torn in ſuch a manner that two or three butts might eaſily have gone into the hole it made, and it threw great quantities of ſtones and dirt to a conſiderable diſtance. Three ſhot were alſo fired at me and another boy

boy who was along with me, one of them in particular ſeemed

"Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage;"

for with a moſt dreadful ſound it hiſſed cloſe by me, and ſtruck a rock at a little diſtance, which it ſhattered to pieces. When I ſaw what perilous circumſtances I was in, I attempted to return the neareſt way I could find, and thereby I got between the Engliſh and the French centinels. An Engliſh ſerjeant, who commanded the outpoſts, ſeeing me, and ſurpriſed how I came there, (which was by ſtealth along the ſeaſhore), reprimanded me very ſeverely for it, and inſtantly took the centinel off his poſt into cuſtody, for his negligence in ſuffering me to paſs the lines. While I was in this ſituation I obſerved at a little diſtance a French horſe, belonging to ſome iſlanders, which I thought I would now mount,

for

for the greater expedition of getting off. Accordingly I took fome cord which I had about me, and making a kind of bridle of it, I put it round the horfe's head, and the tame beaft very quietly fuffered me to tie him thus and mount him. As foon as I was on the horfe's back I began to kick and beat him, and try every means to make him go quick, but all to very little purpofe: I could not drive him out of a flow pace. While I was creeping along, ftill within reach of the enemy's fhot, I met with a fervant well mounted on an Englifh horfe, I immediately ftopped; and, crying, told him my cafe; and begged of him to help me, and this he effectually did; for, having a fine large whip, he began to lafh my horfe with it fo feverely that he fet off full fpeed with me towards the fea, while I was quite unable to hold or manage him. In

this

this manner I went along till I came to a craggy precipice. I now could not ſtop my horſe; and my mind was filled with apprehenſions of my deplorable fate ſhould he go down the precipice, which he appeared fully diſpoſed to do: I therefore thought I had better throw myſelf off him at once, which I did immediately with a great deal of dexterity, and fortunately eſcaped unhurt. As ſoon as I found myſelf at liberty I made the beſt of my way for the ſhip, determined I would not be ſo fool-hardy again in a hurry.

We continued to beſiege the citadel till June, when it ſurrendered. During the ſiege I have counted above ſixty ſhells and carcaſes in the air at once. When this place was taken I went through the citadel, and in the bomb-proofs under it, which were cut in the ſolid rock; and I thought it a ſurpriſing

place,

place, both for ſtrength and building: notwithſtanding which our ſhots and ſhells had made amazing devaſtation, and ruinous heaps all around it.

After the taking of this iſland, our ſhips with ſome others commanded by commodore Stanhope in the Swiftſure, went to Baſſe-road, where we blocked up a French fleet. Our ſhips were there from June till February following; and in that time I ſaw a great many ſcenes of war, and ſtratagems on both ſides to deſtroy each others fleet. Sometimes we would attack the French with ſome ſhips of the line; at other times with boats; and frequently we made prizes. Once or twice the French attacked us by throwing ſhells with their bomb-veſſels; and one day as a French veſſel was throwing ſhells at our ſhips ſhe broke from her ſprings, behind the iſle of I de Re; the tide be-

ing complicated, ſhe came within a gun ſhot of the Naſſau; but the Naſſau could not bring a gun to bear upon her, and thereby the Frenchman got off. We were twice attacked by their fire-floats, which they chained together, and then let them float down with the tide; but each time we ſent boats with graplings, and towed them ſafe out of the fleet.

We had different commanders while we were at this place, Commodores Stanhope, Dennis, Lord Howe, &c. From hence, before the Spaniſh war began, our ſhip and the Waſp ſloop were ſent to St. Sebaſtian in Spain, by Commodore Stanhope; and Commodore Dennis afterwards ſent our ſhip as a cartel to Bayonne in France*, after which

*Among others whom we brought from Bayonne, were two gentlemen, who had been in the West Indies,

which † we went in February in 1762 to Belle-Isle, and there stayed till the summer, when we left it, and returned to Portsmouth.

After our ship was fitted out again for service, in September she went to Guernsey, where I was very glad to see

where they sold slaves; and they confessed they had made at one time a false bill of sale, and sold two Portuguese white men among a lot of slaves.

† Some people have it, that sometimes shortly before persons die their ward has been seen; that is, some spirit exactly in their likeness, though they are themselves at other places at the same time. One day while we were at Bayonne Mr. Mondle saw one of our men, as he thought, in the gun-room; and a little after, coming on the quarter-deck, he spoke of some circumstances of this man to some of the officers. They told him that the man was then out of the ship, in one of the boats with the Lieutenant: but Mr. Mondle would not believe it, and we searched the ship, when he found the man was actually out of her; and when the boat returned some time afterwards, we found the man had been drowned at the very time Mr. Mondle thought he saw him.

my old hoftefs, who was now a widow, and my former little charming companion, her daughter. I fpent fome time here very happily with them, till October, when we had orders to repair to Portfmouth. We parted from each other with a great deal of affection; and I promifed to return foon, and fee them again, not knowing what all-powerful fate had determined for me. Our fhip having arrived at Portfmouth, we went into the harbour, and remained there till the latter end of November, when we heard great talk about peace; and, to our very great joy, in the beginning of December we had orders to go up to London with our fhip to be paid off. We received this news with loud huzzas, and every other demonftration of gladnefs; and nothing but mirth was to be feen throughout every part of the

fhip.

ſhip. I too was not without my ſhare of the general joy on this occaſion. I thought now of nothing but being freed, and working for myſelf, and thereby getting money to enable me to get a good education; for I always had a great deſire to be able at leaſt to read and write; and while I was on ſhip-board I had endeavoured to improve myſelf in both. While I was in the Ætna particularly, the captain's clerk taught me to write, and gave me a ſmattering of arithmetic as far as the rule of three. There was alſo one Daniel Queen, about forty years of age, a man very well educated, who meſſed with me on board this ſhip, and he likewiſe dreſſed and attended the captain. Fortunately this man ſoon became very much attached to me, and took very great pains to inſtruct me in many things. He taught

me to ſhave and dreſs hair a little, and alſo to read in the Bible, explaining many paſſages to me, which I did not comprehend. I was wonderfully ſurpriſed to ſee the laws and rules of my country written almoſt exactly here; a circumſtance which I believe tended to impreſs our manners and cuſtoms more deeply on my memory. I uſed to tell him of this reſemblance; and many a time we have ſat up the whole night together at this employment. In ſhort, he was like a father to me; and ſome even uſed to call me after his name; they alſo ſtyled me the black Chriſtian. Indeed I almoſt loved him with the affection of a ſon. Many things I have denied myſelf that he might have them; and when I uſed to play at marbles or any other game, and won a few halfpence, or got any little money, which I ſometimes

times did, for ſhaving any one, I uſed to buy him a little ſugar or tobacco, as far as my ſtock of money would go. He uſed to ſay, that he and I never ſhould part; and that when our ſhip was paid off, as I was as free as himſelf or any other man on board, he would inſtruct me in his buſineſs, by which I might gain a good livelihood. This gave me new life and ſpirits; and my heart burned within me, while I thought the time long till I obtained my freedom. For though my maſter had not promiſed it to me, yet, beſides the aſſurances I had received that he had no right to detain me, he always treated me with the greateſt kindneſs, and repoſed in me an unbounded confidence; he even paid attention to my morals; and would never ſuffer me to deceive him, or tell lies, of which he uſed to tell me the conſequences; and

that if I did ſo God would not love me; ſo that, from all this tenderneſs, I had never once ſuppoſed, in all my dreams of freedom, that he would think of detaining me any longer than I wiſhed.

In purſuance of our orders we ſailed from Portſmouth for the Thames, and arrived at Deptford the 10th of December, where we caſt anchor juſt as it was high water. The ſhip was up about half an hour, when my maſter ordered the barge to be manned; and all in an inſtant, without having before given me the leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect any thing of the matter, he forced me into the barge; ſaying, I was going to leave him, but he would take care I ſhould not. I was ſo ſtruck with the unexpectedneſs of this proceeding, that for ſome time I did not make a reply, only I made an offer to go for my books

books and cheſt of clothes, but he ſwore I ſhould not move out of his ſight; and if I did he would cut my throat, at the ſame time taking his hanger. I began, however, to collect myſelf; and, plucking up courage, I told him I was free, and he could not by law ſerve me ſo. But this only enraged him the more; and he continued to ſwear, and ſaid he would ſoon let me know whether he would or not, and at that inſtant ſprung himſelf into the barge from the ſhip, to the aſtoniſhment and ſorrow of all on board. The tide, rather unluckily for me, had juſt turned downward, ſo that we quickly fell down the river along with it, till we came among ſome outward-bound Weſt Indiamen; for he was reſolved to put me on board the firſt veſſel he could get to receive me. The boat's crew, who pulled againſt

their will, became quite faint different times, and would have gone ashore; but he would not let them. Some of them strove then to cheer me, and told me he could not sell me, and that they would stand by me, which revived me a little; and I still entertained hopes; for as they pulled along he asked some vessels to receive me, but they could not. But, just as we had got a little below Gravesend, we came alongside of a ship which was going away the next tide for the West Indies; her name was the Charming Sally, Captain James Doran; and my master went on board and agreed with him for me; and in a little time I was sent for into the cabin. When I came there Captain Doran asked me if I knew him; I answered that I did not; 'Then,' said he 'you are now my slave.' I told him my master could not sell me

to

to him, nor to any one elſe. 'Why,' ſaid he, 'did not your maſter buy you?' I confeſſed he did. 'But I have ſerved 'him,' ſaid I, 'many years, and he has 'taken all my wages and prize-money, 'for I only got one ſixpence during 'the war; beſides this I have been bap- 'tized; and by the laws of the land 'no man has a right to ſell me:' And I added, that I had heard a lawyer and others at different times tell my maſter ſo. They both then ſaid that thoſe people who told me ſo were not my friends; but I replied — it was very extraordinary that other people did not know the law as well as they. Upon this Captain Doran ſaid I talked too much Engliſh; and if I did not behave myſelf well, and be quiet, he had a method on board to make me. I was too well convinced of his power over me to doubt what he ſaid;

 and

and my former ſufferings in the ſlave-ſhip preſenting themſelves to my mind, the recollection of them made me ſhudder. However, before I retired I told them that as I could not get any right among men here I hoped I ſhould hereafter in Heaven; and I immediately left the cabin, filled with reſentment and ſorrow. The only coat I had with me my maſter took away with him, and ſaid if my prize-money had been 10,000 l. he had a right to it all, and would have taken it. I had about nine guineas, which, during my long ſea-faring life, I had ſcraped together from trifling perquiſites and little ventures; and I hid it that inſtant, leſt my maſter ſhould take that from me likewiſe, ſtill hoping that by ſome means or other I ſhould make my eſcape to the ſhore; and indeed ſome of my old ſhipmates told me not to

deſpair,

despair, for they would get me back again; and that, as soon as they could get their pay, they would immediately come to Portsmouth to me, where this ship was going: but, alas! all my hopes were baffled, and the hour of my deliverance was yet far off. My master, having soon concluded his bargain with the captain, came out of the cabin, and he and his people got into the boat and put off; I followed them with aching eyes as long as I could, and when they were out of sight I threw myself on the deck, while my heart was ready to burst with sorrow and anguish.

CHAP. V.

The author's reflections on his situation—Is deceived by a promise of being delivered—His despair at sailing for the West Indies—Arrives at Montserrat, where he is sold to Mr. King—Various interesting instances of oppression, cruelty, and extortion, which the author saw practised upon the slaves in the West Indies during his captivity from the year 1763 *to* 1766—*Address on it to the planters.*

THUS, at the moment I expected all my toils to end, was I plunged, as I supposed, in a new slavery; in comparison of which all my service hitherto had

had been 'perfect freedom;' and whose horrors, always present to my mind, now rushed on it with tenfold aggravation. I wept very bitterly for some time: and began to think that I must have done something to displease the Lord, that he thus punished me so severely. This filled me with painful reflections on my past conduct; I recollected that on the morning of our arrival at Deptford I had rashly sworn that as soon as we reached London I would spend the day in rambling and sport. My conscience smote me for this unguarded expression: I felt that the Lord was able to disappoint me in all things, and immediately considered my present situation as a judgment of Heaven on account of my presumption in swearing: I therefore, with contrition of heart, acknowledged my transgression to God, and poured out

out my ſoul before him with unfeigned repentance, and with earneſt ſupplications I beſought him not to abandon me in my diſtreſs, nor caſt me from his mercy for ever. In a little time my grief, ſpent with its own violence, began to ſubſide; and after the firſt confuſion of my thoughts was over I reflected with more calmneſs on my preſent condition: I conſidered that trials and diſappointments are ſometimes for our good, and I thought God might perhaps have permitted this in order to teach me wiſdom and reſignation; for he had hitherto ſhadowed me with the wings of his mercy, and by his inviſible but powerful hand brought me the way I knew not. Theſe reflections gave me a little comfort, and I roſe at laſt from the deck with dejection and ſorrow in my countenance, yet mixed with ſome faint hope that the

the *Lord would appear* for my deliverance.

Soon afterwards, as my new maſter was going aſhore, he called me to him, and told me to behave myſelf well, and do the buſineſs of the ſhip the ſame as any of the reſt of the boys, and that I ſhould fare the better for it; but I made him no anſwer. I was then aſked if I could ſwim, and I ſaid, No. However I was made to go under the deck, and was well watched. The next tide the ſhip got under way, and ſoon after arrived at the Mother Bank, Portſmouth; where ſhe waited a few days for ſome of the Weſt India convoy. While I was here I tried every means I could deviſe amongſt the people of the ſhip to get me a boat from the ſhore, as there was none ſuffered to come alongſide of the ſhip; and their own, whenever it was uſed,

 was

was hoiſted in again immediately. A ſailor on board took a guinea from me on pretence of getting me a boat; and promiſed me, time after time, that it was hourly to come off. When he had the watch upon deck I watched alſo; and looked long enough, but all in vain; I could never ſee either the boat or my guinea again. And what I thought was ſtill the worſt of all, the fellow gave information, as I afterwards found, all the while to the mates, of my intention to go off, if I could in any way do it; but, rogue like, he never told them he had got a guinea from me to procure my eſcape. However, after we had ſailed, and his trick was made known to the ſhip's crew, I had ſome ſatisfaction in ſeeing him deteſted and deſpiſed by them all for his behaviour to me. I was ſtill in hopes that my old ſhipmates would

not

not forget their promiſe to come for me to Portſmouth: and, indeed, at laſt, but not till the day before we failed, ſome of them did come there, and ſent me off ſome oranges, and other tokens of their regard. They alſo ſent me word they would come off to me themſelves the next day or the day after; and a lady alſo, who lived in Goſport, wrote to me that ſhe would come and take me out of the ſhip at the ſame time. This lady had been once very intimate with my former maſter: I uſed to ſell and take care of a great deal of property for her, in different ſhips; and in return ſhe always ſhewed great friendſhip for me, and uſed to tell my maſter that ſhe would take me away to live with her: but, unfortunately for me, a diſagreement ſoon afterwards took place between them; and ſhe was ſucceeded in my maſter's good

good graces by another lady, who appeared ſole miſtreſs of the Ætna, and moſtly lodged on board. I was not ſo great a favourite with this lady as with the former; ſhe had conceived a pique againſt me on ſome occaſion when ſhe was on board, and ſhe did not fail to inſtigate my maſter to treat me in the manner he did*.

However, the next morning, the 30th of December, the wind being briſk and eaſterly, the Œolus frigate, which was to eſcort the convoy, made a ſignal for ſailing. All the ſhips

* Thus was I ſacrificed to the envy and reſentment of this woman for knowing that the lady whom ſhe had ſucceeded in my maſter's good graces deſigned to take me into her ſervice; which, had I once got on ſhore, ſhe would not have been able to prevent. She felt her pride alarmed at the ſuperiority of her rival in being attended by a black ſervant: it was not leſs to prevent this than to be revenged on me, that ſhe cauſed the captain to treat me thus cruelly.

then

then got up their anchors; and, before any of my friends had an opportunity to come off to my relief, to my inexpressible anguish our ship had got under way. What tumultuous emotions agitated my soul when the convoy got under sail, and I a prisoner on board, now without hope! I kept my swimming eyes upon the land in a state of unutterable grief; not knowing what to do, and despairing how to help myself. While my mind was in this situation the fleet sailed on, and in one day's time I lost sight of the wished-for land. In the first expressions of my grief I reproached my fate, and wished I had never been born. I was ready to curse the tide that bore us, the gale that wafted my prison, and even the ship that conducted us; and I called on death to relieve me from the horrors I felt and dreaded

dreaded, that I might be in that place
"Where ſlaves are free, and men oppreſs no more.
"Fool that I was, inur'd ſo long to pain,
"To truſt to hope, or dream of joy again.
"* * * * * * * * * * * *
"Now dragg'd once more beyond the weſtern main,
"To groan beneath ſome daſtard planter's chain;
"Where my poor countrymen in bondage wait
"The long enfranchiſement of ling'ring fate:
"Hard ling'ring fate! while, ere the dawn of day,
"Rous'd by the laſh they go their cheerleſs way;
"And as their ſouls with ſhame and anguiſh burn,
"Salute with groans unwelcome morn's return,
"And, chiding ev'ry hour the ſlow-pac'd ſun,
"Purſue their toils till all his race is run.
"No eye to mark their ſuff'rings with a tear;
"No friend to comfort, and no hope to cheer:
"Then, like the dull unpity'd brutes, repair
"To ſtalls as wretched, and as coarſe a fare;
"Thank heaven one day of miſ'ry was o'er,
"Then ſink to ſleep, and wiſh to wake no more*.

* "The Dying Negro," a poem originally publiſhed in 1773. Perhaps it may not be deemed impertinent here to add, that this elegant and pathetic little poem was occaſioned, as appears by the advertiſement prefixed to it, by the following incident. "A black, who, a few days before had ran away from his maſter, and got himſelf chriſtened, with intent to marry a white woman his fellow-ſervant, being taken and ſent on board a ſhip in the Thames, took an opportunity of ſhooting himſelf through the head."

The

The turbulence of my emotions however naturally gave way to calmer thoughts, and I soon perceived what fate had decreed no mortal on earth could prevent. The convoy sailed on without any accident, with a pleasant gale and smooth sea, for six weeks, till February, when one morning the Œolus ran down a brig, one of the convoy, and she instantly went down and was inguifed in the dark recesses of the ocean. The convoy was immediately thrown into great confusion till it was day-light; and the Œolus was illumined with lights to prevent any farther mischief. On the 13th of February 1763, from the mast-head, we descried our destined island Montserrat; and soon after I beheld those

"Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
"And rest can rarely dwell. Hope never comes
"That comes to all, but torture without end
"Still urges."

At

At the fight of this land of bondage, a frefh horror ran through all my frame, and chilled me to the heart. My former flavery now rofe in dreadful review to my mind, and difplayed nothing but mifery, ftripes, and chains; and, in the firft paroxyfm of my grief, I called upon God's thunder, and his avenging power, to direct the ftroke of death to me, rather than permit me to become a flave, and be fold from lord to lord.

In this ftate of my mind our fhip came to an anchor, and foon after difcharged her cargo. I now knew what it was to work hard; I was made to help to unload and load the fhip. And, to comfort me in my diftrefs in that time, two of the failors robbed me of all my money, and ran away from the fhip. I had been fo long ufed to an European climate that at firft

firſt I felt the ſcorching Weſt India ſun very painful, while the daſhing ſurf would toſs the boat, and the people in it frequently above high water mark. Sometimes our limbs were broken with this, or even attended with inſtant death, and I was day by day mangled and torn.

About the middle of May, when the ſhip was got ready to ſail for England, I all the time believing that Fate's blackeſt clouds were gathering over my head, and expecting their burſting would mix me with the dead, Captain Doran ſent for me aſhore one morning, and I was told by the meſſenger that my fate was then determined. With fluttering ſteps and trembling heart I came to the captain, and found with him one Mr. Robert King, a quaker, and the firſt merchant in the place. The captain then told me

me my former maſter had ſent me there to be ſold; but that he had deſired him to get me the beſt maſter he could, as he told him I was a very deſerving boy, which Captain Doran ſaid he found to be true; and if he were to ſtay in the Weſt Indies he would be glad to keep me himſelf; but he could not venture to take me to London, for he was very ſure that when I came there I would leave him. I at that inſtant burſt out a crying, and begged much of him to take me to England with him, but all to no purpoſe. He told me he had got me the very beſt maſter in the whole iſland, with whom I ſhould be as happy as if I were in England, and for that reaſon he choſe to let him have me, though he could ſell me to his own brother-in-law for a great deal more money than what he got from this gentleman.

Mr.

Mr. King, my new maſter, then made a reply, and ſaid the reaſon he had bought me was on account of my good character; and, as he had not the leaſt doubt of my good behaviour, I ſhould be very well off with him. He alſo told me he did not live in the Weſt Indies, but at Philadelphia, where he was going ſoon; and, as I underſtood ſomething of the rules of arithmetic, when we got there he would put me to ſchool, and fit me for a clerk. This converſation relieved my mind a little, and I left thoſe gentlemen conſiderably more at eaſe in myſelf than when I came to them; and I was very grateful to Captain Doran, and even to my old maſter, for the character they had given me; a character which I afterwards found of infinite ſervice to me. I went on board again, and took leave of all my ſhipmates; and the next day

the ſhip ſailed. When ſhe weighed anchor I went to the waterſide and looked at her with a very wiſhful and aching heart, and followed her with my eyes and tears until ſhe was totally out of ſight. I was ſo bowed down with grief that I could not hold up my head for many months; and if my new maſter had not been kind to me I believe I ſhould have died under it at laſt. And indeed I ſoon found that he fully deſerved the good character which Captain Doran had given me of him; for he poſſeſſed a moſt amiable diſpoſition and temper, and was very charitable and humane. If any of his ſlaves behaved amiſs he did not beat or uſe them ill, but parted with them. This made them afraid of diſobliging him; and as he treated his ſlaves better than any other man on the iſland, ſo he was better and more faithfully ſerved by

by them in return. By his kind treatment I did at laſt endeavour to compoſe myſelf; and with fortitude, though moneyleſs, determined to face whatever fate had decreed for me. Mr. King ſoon aſked me what I could do; and at the ſame time ſaid he did not mean to treat me as a common ſlave. I told him I knew ſomething of ſeamanſhip, and could ſhave and dreſs hair pretty well; and I could refine wines, which I had learned on ſhipboard, where I had often done it; and that I could write, and underſtood arithmetic tolerably well as far as the Rule of Three. He then aſked me if I knew any thing of gauging; and, on my anſwering that I did not, he ſaid one of his clerks ſhould teach me to gauge.

Mr. King dealt in all manner of merchandize, and kept from one to

ſix clerks. He loaded many veſſels in a year; particularly to Philadelphia, where he was born, and was connected with a great mercantile houſe in that city. He had beſides many veſſels and droggers, of different ſizes, which uſed to go about the iſland; and others to collect rum, ſugar, and other goods. I underſtood pulling and managing thoſe boats very well; and this hard work, which was the firſt that he ſet me to, in the ſugar ſeaſons uſed to be my conſtant employment. I have rowed the boat, and ſlaved at the oars, from one hour to ſixteen in the twenty-four; during which I had fifteen pence ſterling per day to live on, though ſometimes only ten pence. However this was conſiderably more than was allowed to other ſlaves that uſed to work with me, and belonged to other gentlemen

on

on the island: those poor souls had never more than nine pence per day, and seldom more than six pence, from their masters or owners, though they earned them three or four pisterines*: for it is a common practice in the West Indies for men to purchase slaves though they have not plantations themselves, in order to let them out to planters and merchants at so much a piece by the day, and they give what allowance they chuse out of this produce of their daily work to their slaves for subsistence; this allowance is often very scanty. My master often gave the owners of these slaves two and a half of these pieces per day, and found the poor fellows in victuals himself, because he thought their owners did not feed them well enough according to the

* These pisterines are of the value of a shilling.

work they did. The ſlaves uſed to like this very well; and, as they knew my maſter to be a man of feeling, they were always glad to work for him in preference to any other gentleman; ſome of whom, after they had been paid for theſe poor people's labours, would not give them their allowance out of it. Many times have I even ſeen theſe unfortunate wretches beaten for aſking for their pay; and often ſeverely flogged by their owners if they did not bring them their daily or weekly money exactly to the time; though the poor creatures were obliged to wait on the gentlemen they had worked for ſometimes for more than half the day before they could get their pay; and this generally on Sundays, when they wanted the time for themſelves. In particular, I knew a countryman of mine who once did not

bring

bring the weekly money directly that it was earned; and though he brought it the same day to his master, yet he was staked to the ground for this pretended negligence, and was just going to receive a hundred lashes, but for a gentleman who begged him off fifty. This poor man was very industrious; and, by his frugality, had saved so much money by working on shipboard, that he had got a white man to buy him a boat, unknown to his master. Some time after he had this little estate the governor wanted a boat to bring his sugar from different parts of the island; and, knowing this to be a negro-man's boat, he seized upon it for himself, and would not pay the owner a farthing. The man on this went to his master, and complained to him of this act of the governor; but the only satisfaction he received was

was to be damned very heartily by his maſter, who aſked him how dared any of his negroes to have a boat. If the juſtly-merited ruin of the governor's fortune could be any gratification to the poor man he had thus robbed, he was not without conſolation. Extortion and rapine are poor providers; and ſome time after this the governor died in the King's Bench in England, as I was told, in great poverty. The laſt war favoured this poor negro man, and he found ſome means to eſcape from his Chriſtian maſter: he came to England; where I ſaw him afterwards ſeveral times. Such treatment as this often drives theſe miſerable wretches to deſpair, and they run away from their maſters at the hazard of their lives. Many of them, in this place, unable to get their pay when they have earned it, and fear-
ing

ing to be flogged, as uſual, if they return home without it, run away where they can for ſhelter, and a reward is often offered to bring them in dead or alive. My maſter uſed ſometimes, in theſe caſes, to agree with their owners, and to ſettle with them himſelf; and thereby he ſaved many of them a flogging.

Once, for a few days, I was let out to fit a veſſel, and I had no victuals allowed me by either party; at laſt I told my maſter of this treatment, and he took me away from it. In many of the eſtates, on the different iſlands where I uſed to be ſent for rum or ſugar, they would not deliver it to me, or any other negro; he was therefore obliged to ſend a white man along with me to thoſe places; and then he uſed to pay him from ſix to ten piſterines a day. From being thus em-

ployed, during the time I ſerved Mr. King, in going about the different eſtates on the iſland, I had all the opportunity I could wiſh for to ſee the dreadful uſage of the poor men; uſage that reconciled me to my ſituation, and made me bleſs God for the hands into which I had fallen.

I had the good fortune to pleaſe my maſter in every department in which he employed me; and there was ſcarcely any part of his buſineſs, or houſehold affairs, in which I was not occaſionally engaged. I often ſupplied the place of a clerk, in receiving and delivering cargoes to the ſhips, in tending ſtores, and delivering goods: and, beſides this, I uſed to ſhave and dreſs my maſter when convenient, and take care of his horſe; and when it was neceſſary, which was very often, I worked likewiſe on board of different

veſſels

vessels of his. By these means I became very useful to my master; and saved him, as he used to acknowledge, above a hundred pounds a year. Nor did he scruple to say I was of more advantage to him than any of his clerks; though their usual wages in the West Indies are from sixty to a hundred pounds current a year.

I have sometimes heard it asserted that a negro cannot earn his master the first cost; but nothing can be further from the truth. I suppose nine tenths of the mechanics throughout the West Indies are negro slaves; and I well know the coopers among them earn two dollars a day; the carpenters the same, and oftentimes more; as also the masons, smiths, and fishermen, &c. and I have known many slaves whose masters would not take a thousand pounds current for them.

 But

But ſurely this aſſertion refutes itſelf; for, if it be true, why do the planters and merchants pay ſuch a price for ſlaves? And, above all, why do thoſe who make this aſſertion exclaim the moſt loudly againſt the abolition of the ſlave trade? So much are men blinded, and to ſuch inconſiſtent arguments are they driven by miſtaken intereſt! I grant, indeed, that ſlaves are ſome times, by half-feeding, half-clothing, over-working and ſtripes, reduced ſo low, that they are turned out as unfit for ſervice, and left to periſh in the woods, or expire on a dunghill.

My maſter was ſeveral times offered by different gentlemen one hundred guineas for me; but he always told them he would not ſell me, to my great joy: and I uſed to double my diligence and care for fear of getting into the hands of thoſe men who did not

allow a valuable slave the common support of life. Many of them even used to find fault with my master for feeding his slaves so well as he did; although I often went hungry, and an Englishman might think my fare very indifferent; but he used to tell them he always would do it, because the slaves thereby looked better and did more work.

While I was thus employed by my master I was often a witness to cruelties of every kind, which were exercised on my unhappy fellow slaves. I used frequently to have different cargoes of new negroes in my care for sale; and it was almost a constant practice with our clerks, and other whites, to commit violent depredations on the chastity of the female slaves; and these I was, though with reluctance, obliged to submit to at all times, being unable to help

help them. When we have had some of these slaves on board my master's vessels to carry them to other islands, or to America, I have known our mates to commit these acts most shamefully, to the disgrace, not of Christians only, but of men. I have even known them gratify their brutal passion with females not ten years old; and these abominations some of them practised to such scandalous excess, that one of our captains discharged the mate and others on that account. And yet in Montserrat I have seen a negro man staked to the ground, and cut most shockingly, and then his ears cut off bit by bit, because he had been connected with a white woman who was a common prostitute: as if it were no crime in the whites to rob an innocent African girl of her virtue; but most heinous in a black man only to gratify

a passion

a paſſion of nature; where the temptation was offered by one of a different colour, though the moſt abandoned woman of her ſpecies. Another negro man was half hanged, and then burnt, for attempting to poiſon a cruel overſeer. Thus by repeated cruelties are the wretched firſt urged to deſpair, and then murdered, becauſe they ſtill retain ſo much of human nature about them as to wiſh to put an end to their miſery, and retaliate on their tyrants! Theſe overſeers are indeed for the moſt part perſons of the worſt character of any denomination of men in the Weſt Indies. Unfortunately, many humane gentlemen, by not reſiding on their eſtates, are obliged to leave the management of them in the hands of theſe human butchers, who cut and mangle the ſlaves in a ſhocking manner on the moſt trifling occaſions, and altogether treat

treat them in every refpect like brutes. They pay no regard to the fituation of pregnant women, nor the leaft attention to the lodging of the field negroes. Their huts, which ought to be well covered, and the place dry where they take their little repofe, are often open fheds, built in damp places; fo that, when the poor creatures return tired from the toils of the field, they contract many diforders from being expofed to the damp air in this uncomfortable ftate, while they are heated, and their pores are open. This neglect certainly confpires with many others to caufe a decreafe in the births as well as in the lives of the grown negroes. I can quote many inftances of gentlemen who refide on their eftates in the Weft Indies, and then the fcene is quite changed; the negroes are treated with lenity and proper care, by

by which their lives are prolonged, and their maſters are profited. To the honour of humanity, I knew ſeveral gentlemen who managed their eſtates in this manner; and they found that benevolence was their true intereſt. And, among many I could mention in ſeveral of the iſlands, I knew one in Montſerrat * whoſe ſlaves looked remarkably well, and never needed any freſh ſupplies of negroes; and there are many other eſtates, eſpecially in Barbadoes, which, from ſuch judicious treatment, need no freſh ſtock of negroes at any time. I have the honour of knowing a moſt worthy and humane gentleman, who is a native of Barbadoes, and has eſtates there †. This gentleman has written a treatiſe on the uſage of his own ſlaves. He

* Mr. Dubury, and many others, Montſerrat.

† Sir Philip Gibbes, Baronet, Barbadoes.

allows them two hours for refrefhment at mid-day; and many other indulgencies and comforts, particularly in their lying; and, befides this, he raifes more provifions on his eftate than they can deftroy; fo that by thefe attentions he faves the lives of his negroes, and keeps them healthy, and as happy as the condition of flavery can admit. I myfelf, as fhall appear in the fequel, managed an eftate, where, by thofe attentions, the negroes were uncommonly cheerful and healthy, and did more work by half than by the common mode of treatment they ufually do. For want, therefore, of fuch care and attention to the poor negroes, and otherwife oppreffed as they are, it is no wonder that the decreafe fhould require 20,000 new negroes annually to fill up the vacant places of the dead.

Even in Barbadoes, notwithftanding thofe

thoſe humane exceptions which I have mentioned, and others I am acquainted with, which juſtly make it quoted as a place where ſlaves meet with the beſt treatment, and need feweſt recruits of any in the Weſt Indies, yet this iſland requires 1000 negroes annually to keep up the original ſtock, which is only 80,000. So that the whole term of a negro's life may be ſaid to be there but fifteen years!* And yet the climate here is in every reſpect the ſame as that from which they are taken, except in being more wholeſome. Do the Britiſh colonies decreaſe in this manner? And yet what a prodigious difference is there between an Engliſh and Weſt-India climate?

While I was in Montſerrat I knew a negro man, named Emanuel Sankey, who endeavoured to eſcape from his

* Benezet's Account of Guinea, p. 16.

miſerable

miserable bondage, by concealing himself on board of a London ship: but fate did not favour the poor oppressed man; for, being discovered when the vessel was under sail, he was delivered up again to his master. This *Christian master* immediately pinned the wretch down to the ground at each wrist and ancle, and then took some sticks of sealing wax, and lighted them, and droped it all over his back. There was another master who was noted for cruelty; and I believe he had not a slave but what had been cut, and had pieces fairly taken out of the flesh: and, after they had been punished thus, he used to make them get into a long wooden box or case he had for that purpose, in which he shut them up during pleasure. It was just about the height and breadth of a man; and the poor wretches had no room, when in the case, to move.

It

It was very common in ſeveral of the iſlands, particularly in St. Kitt's, for the ſlaves to be branded with the initial letters of their maſter's name; and a load of heavy iron hooks hung about their necks. Indeed on the moſt trifling occaſions they were loaded with chains; and often inſtruments of torture were added. The iron muzzle, thumb-ſcrews, &c. are ſo well known, as not to need a deſcription, and were ſometimes applied for the ſlighteſt faults. I have ſeen a negro beaten till ſome of his bones were broken, for even letting a pot boil over. Is it ſurpriſing that uſage like this ſhould drive the poor creatures to deſpair, and make them ſeek a refuge in death from thoſe evils which render their lives intolerable—while,

"With ſhudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghaſt,
"They view their lamentable lot, and find
"No reſt!"

This

This they frequently do. A negro-man on board a veſſel of my maſter, while I belonged to her, having been put in irons for ſome trifling miſdemeanor, and kept in that ſtate for ſome days, being weary of life, took an opportunity of jumping overboard into the ſea; however, he was picked up without being drowned. Another, whoſe life was alſo a burden to him, reſolved to ſtarve himſelf to death, and refuſed to eat any victuals; this procured him a ſevere flogging: and he alſo, on the firſt occaſion which offered, jumped overboard at Charles Town, but was ſaved.

Nor is there any greater regard ſhewn to the little property than there is to the perſons and lives of the negroes. I have already related an inſtance or two of particular oppreſſion out of many which I have witneſſed; but the

the following is frequent in all the islands. The wretched field-slaves, after toiling all the day for an unfeeling owner, who gives them but little victuals, steal sometimes a few moments from rest or refreshment to gather some small portion of grass, according as their time will admit. This they commonly tie up in a parcel; (either a bit, worth six pence; or half a bit's-worth) and bring it to town, or to the market, to sell. Nothing is more common than for the white people on this occasion to take the grass from them without paying for it; and not only so, but too often also, to my knowledge, our clerks, and many others, at the same time have committed acts of violence on the poor, wretched, and helpless females; whom I have seen for hours stand crying to no purpose, and get no redress or pay of any kind. Is

not this one common and crying sin enough to bring down God's judgment on the islands? He tells us the oppressor and the oppressed are both in his hands; and if these are not the poor, the broken-hearted, the blind, the captive, the bruised, which our Saviour speaks of, who are they? One of these depredators once, in St. Eustatia, came on board of our vessel, and bought some fowls and pigs of me; and a whole day after his departure with the things he returned again and wanted his money back: I refused to give it; and, not seeing my captain on board, he began the common pranks with me; and swore he would even break open my chest and take my money. I therefore expected, as my captain was absent, that he would be as good as his word: and he was just proceeding to strike me, when fortunately

a British

poor, the broken-hearted, the blind, the captive, the bruiſed, which our Saviour ſpeaks of, who are they? One of theſe depredators once, in St. Euſtatia, came on board of our veſſel, and bought ſome fowls and pigs of me; and a whole day after his departure with the things, he returned again and wanted his money back: I refuſed to give it; and, not ſeeing my captain on board, he began the common pranks with me; and ſwore he would even break open my cheſt and take my money. I therefore expected, as my captain was abſent, that he would be as good as his word: and he was juſt proceeding to ſtrike me, when fortunately a Britiſh ſeaman on board, whoſe heart had not been debauched by a Weſt India climate, interpoſed and prevented him. But had the cruel man ſtruck me I certainly ſhould have defended

myself at the hazard of my life; for what is life to a man thus oppressed? He went away, however, swearing; and threatened that whenever he caught me on shore he would shoot me, and pay for me afterwards.

The small account in which the life of a negro is held in the West Indies, is so universally known, that it might seem impertinent to quote the following extract, if some people had not been hardy enough of late to assert that negroes are on the same footing in that respect as Europeans. By the 329th Act, page 125, of the Assembly of Barbadoes, it is enacted 'That if 'any negro, or other slave, under punishment by his master, or his order, 'for running away, or any other crime 'or misdemeanor towards his said 'master, unfortunately shall suffer in 'life or member, no person what-

'so-

'soever ſhall be liable to a fine; but
'if any man ſhall out of *wantonneſs,*
'*or only of bloody-mindedneſs, or cruel*
'*intention, wilfully kill a negro, or other*
'*ſlave, of his own, he ſhall pay into the*
'*public treaſury fifteen pounds ſterling.*'
And it is the ſame in moſt, if not all,
of the Weſt India iſlands. Is not this
one of the many acts of the iſlands
which call loudly for redreſs? And
do not the Aſſembly which enacted it
deſerve the appellation of ſavages and
brutes rather than of chriſtians and
men? It is an act at once unmerciful,
unjuſt, and unwiſe; which for cruelty
would diſgrace an aſſembly of thoſe
who are called barbarians; and for its
injuſtice and *inſanity* would ſhock the
morality and common ſenſe of a Samaide or Hottentot.

Shocking as this and many more acts
of the bloody Weſt India code at firſt
view

view appear, how is the iniquity of it heightened when we consider to whom it may be extended! Mr. James Tobin, a zealous labourer in the vineyard of slavery, gives an account of a French planter of his acquaintance, in the island of Martinico, who shewed him many mulattoes working in the fields like beasts of burden; and he told Mr. Tobin these were all the produce of his own loins! And I myself have known similar instances. Pray, reader, are these sons and daughters of the French planter less his children by being begotten on black women? And what must be the virtue of those legislators, and the feelings of those fathers, who estimate the lives of their sons, however begotten, at no more than fifteen pounds; though they should be murdered, as the act says, *out of wantonness and bloody-mindedness!* But is not

not the ſlave trade entirely a war with the heart of man? And ſurely that which is begun by breaking down the barriers of virtue involves in its continuance deſtruction to every principle, and buries all ſentiments in ruin!

I have often ſeen ſlaves, particularly thoſe who were meagre, in different iſlands, put into ſcales and weighed; and then ſold from three pence to ſix pence or nine pence a pound. My maſter, however, whoſe humanity was ſhocked at this mode, uſed to ſell ſuch by the lump. And at or after a ſale it was not uncommon to ſee negroes taken from their wives, wives taken from their huſbands, and children from their parents, and ſent off to other iſlands, and wherever elſe their merciless lords chooſe; and probably never more during life ſee each other! Oftentimes my heart has bled at theſe

partings; when the friends of the departed have been at the water fide, and, with fighs and tears, have kept their eyes fixed on the veffel, till it went out of fight.

A poor Creole negro I knew well, who, after having been often thus tranfported from ifland to ifland, at laft refided in Montferrat. This man ufed to tell me many melancholy tales of himfelf. Generally, after he had done working for his mafter, he ufed to employ his few leifure moments to go a fifhing. When he had caught any fifh, his mafter would frequently take them from him without paying him; and at other times fome other white people would ferve him in the fame manner. One day he faid to me, very movingly, 'Sometimes when a 'white man take away my fifh I go to 'my mafer, and he get me my right; 'and

'and when my mafer by ftrength take 'away my fifhes, what me muft do? 'I can't go to any body to be righted; 'then,' faid the poor man, looking up above, 'I muft look up to God Mighty 'in the top for right.' This artlefs tale moved me much, and I could not help feeling the juft caufe Mofes had in redreffing his brother againft the Egyptian. I exhorted the man to look up ftill to the God on the top, fince there was no redrefs below. Though I little thought then that I myfelf fhould more than once experience fuch impofition, and need the fame exhortation hereafter, in my own tranfactions in the iflands: and that even this poor man and I fhould fome time after fuffer together in the fame manner, as fhall be related hereafter.

Nor was fuch ufage as this confined to particular places or individuals; for, in

in all the different iſlands in which I have been (and I have viſited no leſs than fifteen) the treatment of the ſlaves was nearly the ſame; ſo nearly indeed, that the hiſtory of an iſland, or even a plantation, with a few ſuch exceptions as I have mentioned, might ſerve for a hiſtory of the whole. Such a tendency has the ſlave-trade to debauch men's minds, and harden them to every feeling of humanity! For I will not ſuppoſe that the dealers in ſlaves are born worſe than other men—No; it is the fatality of this miſtaken avarice, that it corrupts the milk of human kindneſs and turns it into gall. And, had the purſuits of thoſe men been different, they might have been as generous, as tender-hearted and juſt, as they are unfeeling, rapacious and cruel. Surely this traffic cannot be good, which ſpreads like a peſtilence, and taints what it touches! which

violates

violates that firſt natural right of mankind, equality and independency, and gives one man a dominion over his fellows which God could never intend! For it raiſes the owner to a ſtate as far above man as it depreſſes the ſlave below it; and, with all the preſumption of human pride, ſets a diſtinction between them, immeaſurable in extent, and endleſs in duration! Yet how miſtaken is the avarice even of the planters.—Are ſlaves more uſeful by being thus humbled to the condition of brutes, than they would be if ſuffered to enjoy the privileges of men? The freedom which diffuſes health and proſperity throughout Britain anſwers you—No. When you make men ſlaves you deprive them of half their virtue, you ſet them in your own conduct an example of fraud, rapine, and cruelty, and compel them to live with you in a ſtate of war; and yet

yet you complain that they are not honeſt or faithful! You ſtupify them with ſtripes, and think it neceſſary to keep them in a ſtate of ignorance; and yet you aſſert that they are incapable of learning; that their minds are ſuch a barren ſoil or moor, that culture would be loſt on them; and that they come from a climate, where nature, though prodigal of her bounties in a degree unknown to yourſelves, has left man alone ſcant and unfiniſhed, and incapable of enjoying the treaſures ſhe has poured out for him!—An aſſertion at once impious and abſurd. Why do you uſe thoſe inſtruments of torture? Are they fit to be applied by one rational being to another? And are ye not ſtruck with ſhame and mortification, to ſee the partakers of your nature reduced ſo low? But, above all, are there no dangers attending this

mode of treatment? Are you not hourly in dread of an insurrection? Nor would it be surprising: for when

"———No peace is given
"To us enslav'd, but custody severe;
"And stripes and arbitrary punishment
"Inflicted—What peace can we return?
"But to our power, hostility and hate;
"Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow.
"Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
"May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
"In doing what we most in suffering feel."

But by changing your conduct, and treating your slaves as men, every cause of fear would be banished. They would be faithful, honest, intelligent and vigorous; and peace, prosperity, and happiness, would attend you.

CHAP. VI.

Some account of Brimstone-Hill in Montserrat—Favourable change in the author's situation—He commences merchant with three pence—His various success in dealing in the different islands, and America, and the impositions he meets with in his transactions with Europeans—A curious imposition on human nature—Danger of the surfs in the West Indies—Remarkable instance of kidnapping a free mulatto—The author is nearly murdered by Doctor Perkins in Savannah.

In the preceding chapter I have set before the reader a few of those many instances of oppression, extortion, and cruelty, which I have been a witness

to in the Weft Indies: but, were I to enumerate them all, the catalogue would be tedious and difgufting. The punifhments of the flaves on every trifling occafion are fo frequent, and fo well known together with the different inftruments with which they are tortured, that it cannot any longer afford novelty to recite them; and they are too fhocking to yield delight either to the writer or the reader. I fhall therefore hereafter only mention fuch as incidentally befell myfelf in the courfe of my adventures.

In the variety of departments in which I was employed by my mafter, I had an opportunity of feeing many curious fcenes in different iflands; but, above all, I was ftruck with a celebrated curiofity called Brimftone-Hill, which is a high and fteep mountain, fome few miles from the town of Plymouth in Montferrat. I had often heard of fome

wonders that were to be seen on this hill, and I went once with some white and black people to visit it. When we arrived at the top, I saw under different cliffs great flakes of brimstone, occasioned by the steams of various little ponds, which were then boiling naturally in the earth. Some of these ponds were as white as milk, some quite blue, and many others of different colours. I had taken some potatoes with me, and I put them into different ponds, and in a few minutes they were well boiled. I tasted some of them, but they were very sulphurous; and the silver shoe buckles, and all the other things of that metal we had among us, were, in a little time turned as black as lead.

Some time in the year 1763, kind Providence seemed to appear rather more favourable to me. One of my master's vessels, a Bermudas sloop, about sixty tons burthen was commanded by one Captain

Captain Thomas Farmer, an Engliſh-man, a very alert and active man, who gained my maſter a great deal of money by his good mangement in carrying paſſengers from one iſland to another; but very often his ſailors uſed to get drunk and run away from the veſſel, which hindered him in his buſineſs very much. This man had taken a liking to me; and many different times begged of my maſter to let me go a trip with him as a ſailor; but he would tell him he could not ſpare me, though the veſſel ſometimes could not go for want of hands, for ſailors were generally very ſcarce in the iſland. However, at laſt, from neceſſity or force, my maſter was prevailed on, though very reluctantly, to let me go with this captain; but he gave him great charge to take care that I did not run away, for if I did he would make him pay for me. This being the caſe, the captain had for

ſome

ſome time a ſharp eye upon me whenever the veſſel anchored; and as ſoon as ſhe returned I was ſent for on ſhore again. Thus was I ſlaving as it were for life, ſometimes at one thing and ſometimes at another; ſo that the captain and I were nearly the moſt uſeful men in my maſter's employment. I alſo became ſo uſeful to the captain on ſhipboard, that many times, when he uſed to aſk for me to go with him, though it ſhould be but for twenty-four hours, to ſome of the iſlands near us, my maſter would anſwer he could not ſpare me, at which the captain would ſwear, and would not go the trip; and tell my maſter I was better to him on board than any three white men he had; for they uſed to behave ill in many reſpects, particularly in getting drunk; and then they frequently got the boat ſtove, ſo as to hinder the veſſel from coming back as ſoon as ſhe might

might have done. This my master knew very well; and at laſt, by the captain's conſtant entreaties, after I had been ſeveral times with him, one day to my great joy, told me the captain would not let him reſt, and aſked whether I would go aboard as a ſailor, or ſtay on ſhore and mind the ſtores, for he could not bear any longer to be plagued in this manner. I was very happy at this propoſal, for I immediately thought I might in time ſtand ſome chance by being on board to get a little money, or poſſibly make my eſcape if I ſhould be uſed ill: I alſo expected to get better food, and in greater abundance; for I had oftentimes felt much hunger, though my maſter treated his ſlaves, as I have obſerved, uncommonly well. I therefore, without heſitation, anſwered him, that I would go and be a ſailor if he pleaſed. Accordingly I was ordered on board directly.

rectly. Neverthelefs, between the veffel and the fhore, when fhe was in port, I had little or no reft, as my mafter always wifhed to have me along with him. Indeed he was a very pleafant gentleman, and but for my expectations on fhipboard I fhould not have thought of leaving him. But the captain liked me alfo very much, and I was entirely his right-hand man. I did all I could to deferve his favour, and in return I received better treatment from him than any other I believe ever met with in the Weft Indies in my fituation.

After I had been failing for fome time with this captain, at length I endeavoured to try my luck and commence merchant. I had but a very fmall capital to begin with; for one fingle half bit, which is equal to three-pence in England, made up my whole ftock. However I trufted to the Lord to be with

with me; and at one of our trips to *St. Eustatia*, a Dutch island, I bought a glass tumbler with my half bit, and when I came to Montserrat I sold it for a bit, or six-pence. Luckily we made several successive trips to St. Eustatia (which was a general mart for the West Indies, about twenty leagues from Montserrat) and in our next, finding my tumbler so profitable, with this one bit I bought two tumblers more; and when I came back I sold them for two bits equal to a shilling sterling. When we went again I bought with these two bits four more of these glasses, which I sold for four bits on our return to Montserrat: and in our next voyage to St. Eustatia, I bought two glasses with one bit, and with the other three I bought a jug of Geneva, nearly about three pints in measure. When we came to Montserrat, I sold the gin for eight bits, and the tumblers for two, so that my

my capital now amounted in all to a dollar, well husbanded and acquired in the space of a month or six weeks, when I blessed the Lord that I was so rich. As we sailed to different islands, I laid this money out in various things occasionally, and it used to turn to very good account, especially when we went to Guadaloupe, Grenada, and the rest of the French islands. Thus was I going all about the islands upwards of four years, and ever trading as I went, during which I experienced many instances of ill usage, and have seen many injuries done to other negroes in our dealings with whites: and, amidst our recreations, when we have been dancing and merry-making, they, without cause, have molested and insulted us. Indeed I was more than once obliged to look up to God on high, as I had advised the poor fisherman some time before. And I had not

been

been long trading for myself in the manner I have related above, when I experienced the like trial in company with him as follows: This man being used to the water, was upon an emergency put on board of us by his master to work as another hand, on a voyage to Santa Cruz; and at our sailing he had brought his little all for a venture which consisted of six bits' worth of limes and oranges in a bag; I had also my whole stock, which was about twelve bits' worth of the same kind of goods, separate in two bags; for we had heard these fruits sold well in that island. When we came there, in some little convenient time he and I went ashore with our fruits to sell them; but we had scarcely landed when we were met by two white men, who presently took our three bags from us. We could not at first guess what they meant to do; and for some time we thought they

they were jefting with us; but they too foon let us know otherwife, for they took our ventures immediately to a houfe hard by, and adjoining the fort, while we followed all the way begging of them to give us our fruits, but in vain. They not only refufed to return them but fwore at us, and threatened if we did not immediately depart they would flog us well. We told them thefe three bags were all we were worth in the world, and that we brought them with us to fell when we came from Montferrat, and fhewed them the veffel. But this was rather againft us, as they now faw we were ftrangers as well as flaves. They ftill therefore fwore, and defired us to be gone, and even took fticks to beat us; while we, feeing they meant what they faid, went off in the greateft confufion and defpair. Thus, in the very minute of gaining more by three times than I ever did

by

by any venture in my life before, was I deprived of every farthing I was worth. An inſupportable misfortune! but how to help ourſelves we knew not. In our conſternation we went to the commanding officer of the fort, and told him how we had been ſerved by ſome of his people; but we obtained not the leaſt redreſs: he anſwered our complaints only by a volley of imprecations againſt us, and immediately took a horſe-whip, in order to chaſtiſe us, ſo that we were obliged to turn out much faſter than we came in. I now, in the agony of diſtreſs and indignation, wiſhed that the ire of God in his forked lightning might transfix theſe cruel oppreſſors among the dead. Still however we perſevered; went back again to the houſe, and begged and beſought them again and again for our fruits, till at laſt ſome other people that were in the houſe aſked if we would be

contented

contented if they kept one bag and gave us the other two. We, feeing no remedy whatever, confented to this; and they, obferving one bag to have both kinds of fruit in it, which belonged to my companion, kept that; and the other two, which were mine they gave us back. As foon as I got them, I ran as faft as I could, and got the firft negro man I could to help me off; my companion, however, ftayed a little longer to plead; he told them the bag they had was his, and likewife all that he was worth in the world; but this was of no avail, and he was obliged to return without it. The poor old man wringing his hands, cried bitterly for his lofs; and, indeed, he then did look up to God on high, which fo moved me with pity for him, that I gave him nearly one third of my fruits. We then proceeded to the markets to fell them; and Providence

was

was more favourable to us than we could have expected, for we ſold our fruits uncommonly well; I got for mine about thirty-ſeven bits. Such a ſurpriſing reverſe of fortune in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time ſeemed like a dream, and proved no ſmall encouragement for me to truſt the Lord in any ſituation. My captain afterwards frequently uſed to take my part, and get me my right, when I have been plundered or uſed ill by theſe tender Chriſtian depredators; among whom I have ſhuddered to obſerve the unceaſing blaſphemous execrations which are wantonly thrown out by perſons of all ages and conditions, not only without occaſion, but even as if they were indulgences and pleaſure.

At one of our trips to St. Kitt's, I had eleven bits of my own; and my friendly captain lent me five more,

with which I bought a Bible. I was very glad to get this book, which I fcarcely could meet with any where. I think there was none fold in Montferrat; and, much to my grief, from being forced out of the Ætna in the manner I have related, my Bible, and the Guide to the Indians, the two books I loved above all others, were left behind.

While I was in this place, St. Kitt's, a very curious impofition on human nature took place: — A white man wanted to marry in the church a free black woman that had land and flaves in Montferrat: but the clergyman told him it was againft the law of the place to marry a white and a black in the church. The man then afked to be married on the water, to which the parfon confented, and the two lovers went in one boat, and the parfon and clerk

clerk in another, and thus the ceremony was performed. After this the loving pair came on board our veſſel, and my captain treated them extremely well, and brought them ſafe to Montſerrat.

The reader cannot but judge of the irkſomeneſs of this ſituation to a mind like mine, in being daily expoſed to new hardſhips and impoſitions, after having ſeen many better days, and been as it were, in a ſtate of freedom and plenty; added to which, every part of the world I had hitherto been in, ſeemed to me a paradiſe in compariſon of the Weſt Indies. My mind was therefore hourly replete with inventions and thoughts of being freed, and, if poſſible, by honeſt and honourable means; for I always remembered the old adage; and I truſt it has ever been my ruling principle, that "Ho-

"nefty is the beft policy;" and likewife that other golden precept—"To do "unto all men as I would they fhould "do unto me." However, as I was from early years a predeftinarian, I thought whatever fate had determined muft ever come to pafs; and therefore, if ever it were my lot to be freed nothing could prevent me, although I fhould at prefent fee no means or hope to obtain my freedom; on the other hand, if it were my fate not to be freed I never fhould be fo, and all my endeavours for that purpofe would be fruitlefs. In the midft of thefe thoughts I therefore looked up with prayers anxioufly to God for my liberty; and at the fame time ufed every honeft means, and did all that was poffible on my part to obtain it. In procefs of time I became mafter of a few pounds, and in a fair way of making more, which

my

my friendly captain knew very well; this occaſioned him ſometimes to take liberties with me; but whenever he treated me waſpiſhly I uſed plainly to tell him my mind, and that I would die before I would be impoſed upon as other negroes were, and that to me life had loſt its reliſh when liberty was gone. This I ſaid although I foreſaw my then well-being or future hopes of freedom (humanly ſpeaking) depended on this man. However, as he could not bear the thoughts of my not ſailing with him, he always became mild on my threats. I therefore continued with him; and, from my great attention to his orders and his buſineſs, I gained him credit, and through his kindneſs to me I at laſt procured my liberty. While I thus went on, filled with the thoughts of freedom, and reſiſting oppreſſion as well as I was able, my life hung daily

in ſuſpence, particularly in the ſurfs. I have formerly mentioned, as I could not ſwim. Theſe are extremely violent throughout the Weſt Indies, and I was ever expoſed to their howling rage and devouring fury in all the iſlands. I have ſeen them ſtrike and toſs a boat right up an end, and maim ſeveral on board. Once in the Grenada iſlands, when I and about eight others were pulling a large boat with two puncheons of water in it, a ſurf ſtruck us, and drove the boat and all in it about half a ſtone's throw, among ſome trees, and above the high water mark. We were obliged to get all the aſſiſtance we could from the neareſt eſtate to mend the boat, and launch it into the water again. At Montſerrat one night, in preſſing hard to get off the ſhore on board, the punt was overſet with us four times; the firſt time I was very near being drowned;

however

however the jacket I had on kept me up above water a little ſpace of time, while I called on a man near me who was a good ſwimmer, and told him I could not ſwim; he then made haſte to me, and, juſt as I was ſinking, he caught hold of me, and brought me to ſounding, and then he went and brought the punt alſo. As ſoon as we had turned the water out of her, leſt we ſhould be uſed ill for being abſent, we attempted again three times more, and as often the horrid ſurfs ſerved us as at firſt; but at laſt, the fifth time we attempted, we gained our point, at the eminent hazard of our lives. One day alſo, at Old Road in Montſerrat, our captain, and three men beſides myſelf, were going in a large canoe in queſt of rum and ſugar, when a ſingle ſurf toſſed the canoe an amazing diſtance from the water,
 and

and ſome of us, near a ſtone's throw from each other: moſt of us were very much bruiſed; ſo that I and many more often ſaid, and really thought, that there was not ſuch another place under the heavens as this. I longed therefore much to leave it, and daily wiſhed to ſee my maſter's promiſe performed of going to Philadelphia.

While we lay in this place a very cruel thing happened on board of our ſloop which filled me with horror; though I found afterwards ſuch practices were frequent. There was a very clever and decent free young mulatto-man who ſailed a long time with us: he had a free woman for his wife, by whom he had a child; and ſhe was then living on ſhore, and all very happy. Our captain and mate, and other people on board, and ſeveral elſewhere, even the natives of Bermudas, all knew this

young

young man from a child that he was always free, and no one had ever claimed him as their property: however, as might too often overcomes right in these parts, it happened that a Bermudas captain, whose vessel lay there for a few days in the road, came on board of us, and seeing the mulatto-man, whose name was Joseph Clipson, he told him he was not free, and that he had orders from his master to bring him to Bermudas. The poor man could not believe the captain to be in earnest; but he was very soon undeceived, his men laying violent hands on him; and although he shewed a certificate of his being born free in St. Kitt's, and most people on board knew that he served his time to boat-building, and always passed for a free man, yet he was forcibly taken out of our vessel. He then asked to be carried

ashore

ashore before the secretary or magistrates, and these infernal invaders of human rights promised him he should; but, instead of that, they carried him on board of the other vessel: and the next day, without giving the poor man any hearing on shore, or suffering him even to see his wife or child, he was carried away, and probably doomed never more in this world to see them again. Nor was this the only instance of this kind of barbarity I was a witness to. I have since often seen in Jamaica and other islands, free men, whom I have known in America, thus villainously trepanned and held in bondage. I have heard of two similar practices even in Philadelphia: and were it not for the benevolence of the quakers in that city, many of the sable race, who now breathe the air of liberty, would, I believe, be groaning indeed

under

under ſome planter's chains. Theſe things opened my mind to a new ſcene of horror to which I had been before a ſtranger. Hitherto I had thought only ſlavery dreadful; but the ſtate of a free negro appeared to me now equally ſo at leaſt, and in ſome reſpects even worſe, for they live in conſtant alarm for their liberty; which is but nominal, for they are univerſally inſulted and plundered without the poſſibility of redreſs; for ſuch is the equity of the Weſt Indian laws, that no free negro's evidence will be admitted in their courts of juſtice. In this ſituation is it ſurpriſing that ſlaves, when mildly treated, ſhould prefer even the miſery of ſlavery to ſuch a mockery of freedom? I was now completely diſguſted with the Weſt Indies, and thought I never ſhould be entirely free until I had left them.

"With thoughts like these my anxious boding mind
" Recall'd those pleasing scenes I left behind;
" Scenes where fair Liberty in bright array
" Makes darkness bright, and e'en illumines day;
" Where nor complexion, wealth, or station, can
" Protect the wretch who makes a slave of man."

I determined to make every exertion to obtain my freedom, and to return to Old England. For this purpose I thought a knowledge of navigation might be of use to me; for, though I did not intend to run away unless I should be ill used; yet, in such a case, if I understood navigation, I might attempt my escape in our sloop, which was one of the swiftest sailing vessels in the West Indies, and I could be at no loss for hands to join me: and if I should make this attempt, I had intended to have gone for England; but this, as I said, was only to be in the event of my meeting with any ill usage. I there-

therefore employed the mate of our veſſel to teach me navigation, for which I agreed to give him twenty-four dollars, and actually paid him part of the money down; though when the captain, ſome time after, came to know that the mate was to have ſuch a ſum for teaching me, he rebuked him, and ſaid it was a ſhame for him to take any money from me. However, my progreſs in this uſeful art was much retarded by the conſtancy of our work. Had I wiſhed to run away I did not want opportunities, which frequently preſented themſelves; and particularly at one time, ſoon after this. When we were at the iſland of Gaurdeloupe there was a large fleet of merchantmen bound for Old France; and, ſeamen then being very ſcarce, they gave from fifteen to twenty pounds a man for the run. Our mate, and all the white ſailors, left

left our veſſel on this account, an
went on board of the French ſhips
They would have had me alſo to g
with them, for they regarded me
and ſwore to protect me, if I woul
go: and, as the fleet was to ſail th
next day, I really believe I could hav
got ſafe to Europe at that time. How
ever, as my maſter was kind, I woul
not attempt to leave him; ſtill re
membering the old maxim, that 'ho
neſty is the beſt policy,' I ſuffere
them to go without me. Indeed m
captain was much afraid of my leavin
him and the veſſel at that time, as I ha
ſo fair an opportunity: but, I than
God, this fidelity of mine turned ou
much to my advantage hereafter, whe
I did not in the leaſt think of it; and
made me ſo much in favour with the
captain, that he uſed now and then to
teach me ſome parts of navigation
him-

himſelf; but ſome of our paſſengers, and others, ſeeing this, found much fault with him for it, ſaying it was a very dangerous thing to let a negro know navigation; thus I was hindered again in my purſuits. About the latter end of the year 1764, my maſter bought a larger ſloop, called the Prudence, about ſeventy or eighty tons, of which my captain had the command. I went with him into this veſſel, and we took a load of new ſlaves for Georgia and Charles Town. My maſter now left me entirely to the captain, though he ſtill wiſhed for me to be with him; but I, who always much wiſhed to loſe ſight of the Weſt Indies, was not a little rejoiced at the thoughts of ſeeing any other country. Therefore, relying on the goodneſs of my captain, I got ready all the little venture I could; and, when the veſſel

was

was ready, we ſailed to my great joy. When we got to our deſtined places, Georgia and Charles Town, I expected I ſhould have an opportunity of ſelling my little property to advantage: but here, particularly in Charles Town, I met with buyers, white men, who impoſed on me as in other places. Notwithſtanding, I was reſolved to have fortitude; thinking no lot or trial too hard when kind Heaven is the rewarder.

We ſoon got loaded again, and returned to Montſerrat; and there, amongſt the reſt of the iſlands, I ſold my goods well; and in this manner I continued trading during the year 1764; meeting with various ſcenes of impoſition, as uſual. After this, my maſter fitted out his veſſel for Philadelphia, in the year 1765; and during the time we were loading her, and getting

ready

ready for the voyage, I worked with redoubled alacrity, from the hope of getting money enough by these voyages to buy my freedom, in time, if it should please God; and also to see the town of Philadelphia, which I had heard a great deal about for some years past; besides which, I had always longed to prove my master's promise the first day I came to him. In the midst of these elevated ideas, and while I was about getting my little merchandize in readiness, one Sunday my master sent for me to his house. When I came there I found him and the captain together; and, on my going in, I was struck with astonishment at his telling me he heard that I meant to run away from him when I got to Philadelphia: 'And therefore,' said he, 'I 'must sell you again: you cost me a 'great deal of money, no less than 'forty

'forty pounds ſterling; and it will
'not do to loſe ſo much. You are a
'valuable fellow,' continued he; 'and
'I can get any day for you one hun-
'dred guineas, from many gentlemen
'in this iſland.' And then he told
me of Captain Doran's brother-in-law,
a ſevere maſter, who ever wanted to
buy me to make me his overſeer. My
captain alſo ſaid he could get much
more than a hundred guineas for me
in Carolina. This I knew to be a fact;
for the gentleman that wanted to buy
me came off ſeveral times on board of
us, and ſpoke to me to live with him,
and ſaid he would uſe me well. When
I aſked what work he would put me to,
he ſaid, as I was a ſailor, he would
make me a captain of one of his rice
veſſels. But I refuſed: and fearing
at the ſame time, by a ſudden turn I
ſaw in the captain's temper, he might

mean

mean to ſell me, I told the gentleman I would not live with him on any condition, and that I certainly would run away with his veſſel: but he ſaid he did not fear that, as he would catch him again; and then he told me how cruelly he would ſerve me if I ſhould do ſo. My captain, however, gave him to underſtand that I knew ſomething of navigation: ſo he thought better of it; and, to my great joy, he went away. I now told my maſter I did not ſay I would run away in Philadelphia; neither did I mean it, as he did not uſe me ill, nor yet the captain: for if they did I certainly would have made ſome attempts before now; but as I thought that if it were God's will I ever ſhould be freed it would be ſo, and, on the contrary, if it was not his will it would not happen; ſo I hoped if ever I were freed, whilſt I was uſed

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well, it ſhould be by honeſt means; but as I could not help myſelf, he muſt do as he pleaſed; I could only hope and truſt to the God of Heaven; and at that inſtant my mind was big with inventions and full of ſchemes to eſcape. I then appealed to the captain whether he ever ſaw any ſign of my making the leaſt attempt to run away; and aſked him if I did not always come on board according to the time for which he gave me liberty; and, more particularly, when all our men left us at Gaurdeloupe and went on board of the French fleet, and adviſed me to go with them, whether I might not, and that he could not have got me again. To my no ſmall ſurpriſe, and very great joy, the captain confirmed every ſyllable that I had ſaid: and even more: for he ſaid he had tried different times to ſee if I

would make any attempt of this kind, both at St. Euſtatia and in America, and he never found that I made the ſmalleſt; but on the contrary, I always came on board according to his orders; and he did really believe, if I ever meant to run away, that, as I could never have had a better opportunity, I would have done it the night the mate and all the people left our veſſel at Gaurdeloupe. The captain then informed my maſter, who had been thus impoſed on by our mate, (though I did not know who was my enemy,) the reaſon the mate had for impoſing this lie upon him; which was, becauſe I had acquainted the captain of the proviſions the mate had given away or taken out of the veſſel. This ſpeech of the captain was like life to the dead to me, and inſtantly my ſoul glorified God; and ſtill more ſo

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on hearing my maſter immediately ſay that I was a ſenſible fellow, and he never did intend to uſe me as a common ſlave; and that but for the entreaties of the captain, and his character of me, he would not have let me go from the ſtores about as I had done: that alſo, in ſo doing, he thought by carrying one little thing or other to different places to ſell I might make money. That he alſo intended to encourage me in this, by crediting me with half a puncheon of rum and half a hogſhead of ſugar at a time; ſo that, from being careful, I might have money enough, in ſome time, to purchaſe my freedom: and, when that was the caſe, I might depend upon it he would let me have it for forty pounds ſterling money, which was only the ſame price he gave for me. This ſound gladdened my poor heart beyond meaſure; though inde

indeed it was no more than the very idea I had formed in my mind of my maſter long before, and I immediately made him this reply: 'Sir, I always 'had that very thought of you, indeed 'I had, and that made me ſo diligent 'in ſerving you.' He then gave me a large piece of ſilver coin, ſuch as I never had ſeen or had before, and told me to get ready for the voyage, and he would credit me with a tierce of ſugar, and another of rum; he alſo ſaid that he had two amiable ſiſters in Philadelphia, from whom I might get ſome neceſſary things. Upon this my noble captain deſired me to go aboard; and, knowing the African metal, he charged me not to ſay any thing of this matter to any body; and he promiſed that the lying mate ſhould not go with him any more. This was a change indeed; in the ſame hour to

feel the moſt exquiſite pain, and in the turn of a moment the fulleſt joy. It cauſed in me ſuch ſenſations as I was only able to expreſs in my looks; my heart was ſo overpowered with gratitude that I could have kiſſed both of their feet. When I left the room I immediately went, or rather flew, to the veſſel, which being loaded, my maſter, as good as his word, truſted me with a tierce of rum, and another of ſugar, when we ſailed, and arrived ſafe at the elegant town of Philadelphia. I ſoon ſold my goods here pretty well; and in this charming place I found every thing plentiful and cheap.

While I was in this place a very extraordinary occurrence befell me. I had been told one evening of a wiſe woman, a Mrs. Davis, who revealed ſecrets, foretold events, &c. I put little faith in this ſtory at firſt, as I could not

not conceive that any mortal could foresee the future disposals of Providence, nor did I believe in any other revelation than that of the Holy Scriptures; however, I was greatly astonished at seeing this woman in a dream that night, though a person I never before beheld in my life; this made such an impression on me, that I could not get the idea the next day out of my mind, and I then became as anxious to see her as I was before indifferent; accordingly in the evening, after we left off working, I inquired where she lived, and being directed to her, to my inexpressible surprise, beheld the very woman in the very same dress she appeared to me to wear in the vision. She immediately told me I had dreamed of her the preceding night; related to me many things that had happened

with a correctneſs that aſtoniſhed me; and finally told me I ſhould not be long a ſlave: this was the more agreeable news, as I believed it the more readily from her having ſo faithfully related the paſt incidents of my life. She ſaid I ſhould be twice in very great danger of my life within eighteen months, which, if I eſcaped, I ſhould afterwards go on well; ſo, giving me her bleſſing, we parted. After ſtaying here ſome time till our veſſel was loaded, and I had bought in my little traffic, we ſailed from this agreeable ſpot for Montſerrat, once more to encounter the raging ſurfs.

We arrived ſafe at Montſerrat, where we diſcharged our cargo; and ſoon after that we took ſlaves on board for St. Euſtatia, and from thence to Georgia. I had always exerted myſelf and did double work, in order to make

make our voyages as ſhort as poſſible; and from thus overworking myſelf while we were at Georgia I caught a fever and ague. I was very ill for eleven days and near dying; eternity was now exceedingly impreſſed on my mind, and I feared very much that awful event. I prayed the Lord therefore to ſpare me; and I made a promiſe in my mind to God, that I would be good if ever I ſhould recover. At length, from having an eminent doctor to attend me, I was reſtored again to health; and ſoon after we got the veſſel loaded, and ſet off for Montſerrat. During the paſſage, as I was perfectly reſtored, and had much buſineſs of the veſſel to mind, all my endeavours to keep up my integrity, and perform my promiſe to God, began to fail; and, in ſpite of all I could do, as we drew nearer and nearer to the

iſlands, my reſolutions more and more declined, as if the very air of that country or climate ſeemed fatal to piety. When we were ſafe arrived at Montſerrat, and I had got aſhore, I forgot my former reſolutions.—Alas! how prone is the heart to leave that God it wiſhes to love! and how ſtrongly do the things of this world ſtrike the ſenſes and captivate the ſoul!—After our veſſel was diſcharged, we ſoon got her ready, and took in, as uſual, ſome of the poor oppreſſed natives of Africa, and other negroes; we then ſet off again for Georgia and Charleſtown. We arrived at Georgia, and, having landed part of our cargo, proceeded to Charleſtown with the remainder. While we were there I ſaw the town illuminated; the guns were fired, and bonfires and other demonſtrations of joy ſhewn, on account of the repeal of the ſtamp

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act. Here I difpofed of fome goods on my own account; the white men buying them with fmooth promifes and fair words, giving me, however, but very indifferent payment. There was one gentleman particularly who bought a puncheon of rum of me, which gave me a great deal of trouble; and, although I ufed the intereft of my friendly captain, I could not obtain any thing for it; for, being a negro man, I could not oblige him to pay me. This vexed me much, not knowing how to act; and I loft fome time in feeking after this Chriftian; and though, when the Sabbath came (which the negroes ufually make their holiday) I was much inclined to go to public worfhip, I was obliged to hire fome black men to help to pull a boat acrofs the water to go in queft of this gentleman. When I found him, after much entreaty, both

from myself and my worthy captain, he at last paid me in dollars; some of them, however, were copper, and of consequence of no value; but he took advantage of my being a negro man, and obliged me to put up with those or none, although I objected to them. Immediately after, as I was trying to pass them in the market, amongst other white men, I was abused for offering to pass bad coin; and, though I shewed them the man I got them from, I was within one minute of being tied up and flogged without either judge or jury; however, by the help of a good pair of heels, I ran off, and so escaped the bastinadoes I should have received. I got on board as fast as I could, but still continued in fear of them until we sailed, which I thanked God we did not long after; and I have never been amongst them since.

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